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The Menace of the New Right
by Irving Howe

THE NEW REPUBLIC

September 9, 1978 Price One Dollar

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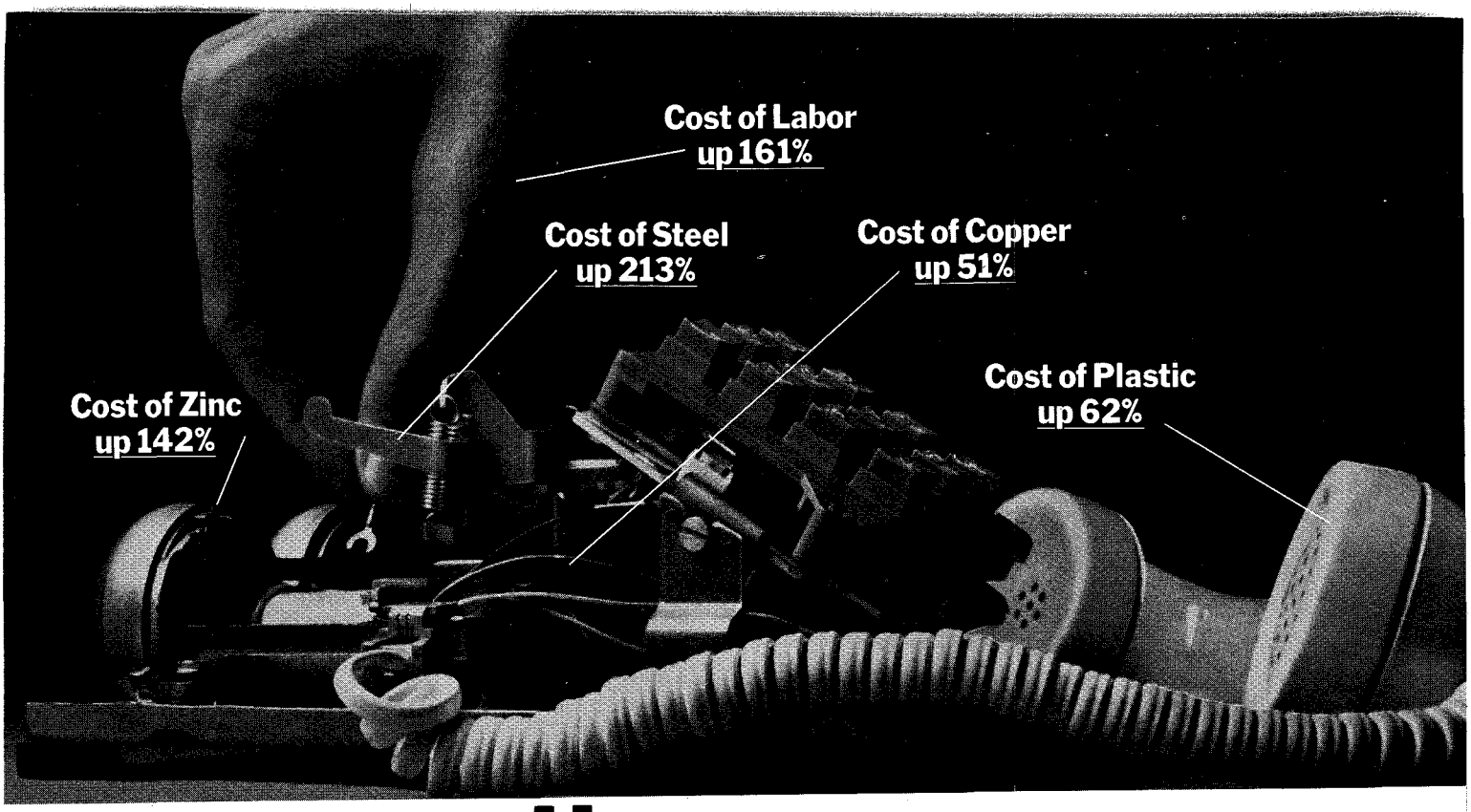

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TRB

from Washington
September 9, 1978

Such Sweet Sorrow

Goodbye, little 78-899 K, we must part! I have grown fond of you in our long acquaintance but it is you, not I, that have precipitated this breach. You look up trustingly from the safe deposit box when I lift the lid; nothing is heard in these sober alcoves but the comfortable snip-snip of middle-aged people cutting bond coupons. But this time it is different. It is a sad moment. This is farewell. . .

The safe deposit vault is at the end of the corridor where tellers sit in cages, and lines of people shuffle past. Everyone has a special look. They are thinking about money. They have worked all week for this moment and they are absorbed by it, putting in or taking out. I pass them, down the cathedral aisle, to perform my own sad rite. I make out an admission slip and thrust it into the electronic clock which suddenly snaps at it, like a turtle catching a fly. The machine stamps my slip with the day, hour, minute, second of my arrival. An acolyte takes me to the inner sanctuary and uses two keys to get my box. I take it to a cubicle the size of a telephone booth—and there you are, 78-899 K.

"The United States of America for value received promises to pay to the bearer the sum of One Thousand Dollars." That has given me comfort for 21 years. Benevolent Abe Lincoln looks out from the upper left corner; everything inspires confidence.

It is a three-and-a-quarter-percent Treasury bond of 1978-83, interest payable June 15 and December 15—$16.25. It is signed by "George Humphrey, Secretary of the Treasury," dated May 1, 1953.

I think about 1953. Good, reliable General Eisenhower was in his first term; Yankee Sherman Adams was his assistant; supple John Foster Dulles was Secretary of State and Jim Hagerty ran things. It was a cabinet, as I wrote at the time, of "eight millionaires and a plumber" (the latter being Labor Secretary Martin Durkin, former president of the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada—UAJAPPFIUSC for short).

How could a bond be insecure under such auspices, that had Humphrey's name at the bottom? George Magoffin Humphrey—fresh from the M. A. Hanna Steel Co.! It was the first conservative administration in two decades, and he was the most conservative. But he was frustrated. He could not control the one thing he thought he could control: the value of the dollar. Little 78-899K had already depreciated when I made her acquaintance; she was a great bargain, I thought, and I snapped her up—$938.75! All I had to do was to hold on till the last coupon was snipped, June 15, 1983, and they would give me One Thousand Dollars.

The attrition of the dollar had already begun. Let me take its value, for convenience, from the end of the Roosevelt regime and trace it down.

President	*Value at term end*
FDR/Truman	$1.00
Truman	90.2 cents
Eisenhower	80.7 cents
Kennedy/Johnson	77.0 cents
Johnson	67.6 cents
Nixon	48.0 cents
Ford	41.0 cents

Humphrey was so conservative that he did not even believe in federal spending to alleviate an economic slump. But why did the dollar slip? As fast as business showed signs of revival he slapped on higher interest rates to stop inflation, and ended up with three recessions in eight years. I was present at the press conference one cold January day in 1957 when the strong-willed secretary blew his top. He exploded at the Eisenhower budget, which he said could be cut in a lot of places. "I don't think you can spend yourself rich," he said. "Mister Secretary," asked May Craig, "would you resign if the administration embarked upon the deficit program you have just described?"

Secretary Humphrey: "I think I would."

It was an innocent time in some ways. To make the post office pay-as-you-go, he told us at that conference, the administration might raise first class delivery above three cents. We couldn't believe him. An oil shortage? "Our new developments of oil in this country have just about kept pace over the past half dozen years with consumption," he said, "so that from a practical point of view it looks as though this thing were about working out."

It was an unusual sight to see the secretary of the Treasury pulling apart the budget which Eisenhower had just sent up to Congress, but he warned against the dangers of deficit spending. He wound up with a plea for balancing the budget. "If we don't over a long period of time I will predict that you will have a depression that will curl your hair," said the almost bald secretary.

Question: "Could we have the stenotypist read that back to us? That is a good quote!" We hurried out with our stories.

We scoffed at General Eisenhower. He sought to reduce the national debt; he failed. He sought to balance the budget, cut federal spending, check centralization, halt inflation; he failed in all these. He had one deficit that was the biggest till then in peacetime. Interest rates on bonds rose above a ceiling that had sufficed through 42 years and two wars.

But as I look back to scoff today I note that the Treasury is elated that inflation rose only 0.5 percent in July—the best performance of 1978! In the first seven months of 1978 the rate was 9.8 percent.

I look down at little 78-899K. My emotions are mixed. This is no time for softer feelings. It is a time of confrontation, reproach, denunciation. It is like the big moment in an Italian opera—I shall burst into an aria in a minute . . . .When you joined me 21 years ago three and a quarter percent was good interest. Now it is a joke. The FDR dollar, which was down to 41 cents under Ford, is 38 cents under Carter. It grieves me to do this. I have had comfort from you, I confess, thinking of you tucked away in your little box, protected by locks, bolts, electronic clocks, gathering unearned increment for me all these years—$16.25 every six months. That was quite a lot once; now it hardly covers an expense-account lunch.

And so, good-bye. What came between us I hardly understand. Do not look at me accusingly. Let us not harbor harsh feelings. Females are frail; bonds are fungible. Let us not call this parting, my dear. This is disintermediationism.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts, Vol. 179, No. 11, Issue 3322, September 9, 1978. *Note:* Issues from July 8 & 15 through August 19 (3313-3319) were misnumbered. Published weekly (except the issues of July 15, August 12, September 2, December 30) and distributed by The New Republic, Inc., 1220 19th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20036. Phone (202) 331-7494. Single copy, $1.00; Yearly subscriptions, $24; foreign, $27; students $17.

Send all remittances and correspondence about subscriptions, undelivered copies and changes of address to Subscription Service Department, The New Republic, P.O. Box 58, Whitinsville, MA 01588. Copyright 1978 by The New Republic, Inc. Item g. Second class postage paid under publication number 382020 at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide.

Cover: Promenade *(1913) by Marc Chagall. Article on page 34.*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

September 9, 1978

Licking the Postal Workers

We can understand well enough why a postal worker might feel displeased with the wage settlement his unions negotiated for him, and why he might be tempted to strike for better wages. The average postal worker's salary is $15,877 a year. If he is a father with a non-working wife and two children, this puts his family income well under the current national average of $18,723. There are no regional differential salaries in the postal service, so if he is located in San Francisco, say, or in the expensive Northeast corridor, he is living even further below average.

He probably doesn't like his job too well, either. Out on the street, it's hot or wet or cold, and heavy. Inside work may be even worse. Most urban post offices were built in the 1930s, when mail volume was half what it is now. They tend to be noisy and overcrowded, with bad ventilation and inadequate locker space, rest rooms and janitorial services. To cut costs the Postal Service orders its regular employees to work extensive overtime, rather than hire more hands. Many postal workers also are required to memorize complicated distribution schedules in their off hours and without compensation.

There are few psychic rewards for working in the postal system. Advancement is strictly by seniority. There is no incentive to work hard or to be imaginative; on the contrary, failing to observe the strict regulations of the almighty Postal Service Manual can lead to trouble. The Postal Service ideal is that its employees should move as parts of a well-tooled machine. But whatever pride one might derive from thinking of oneself as an efficient cog is lost in the post office, where peer pressures tend to encourage mass sloth. Does the average citizen mutter and curse as he stands for 20 minutes at a stamp line while dozens of postal employees seem to be dozing all around? Supervisors are powerless to do much about it. Disciplining a postal employee is difficult and firing one is practically impossible. The US Postal Service is a national joke, and being part of it must do little for one's sense of dignity.

But the postal workers' main beef with the new contract they rejected the week before last was not about pride or working conditions, but about money. The contract provided for a basic wage increase of 10 percent over three years, plus cost-of-living adjustments raising the total to a maximum of 19.5 percent, or 6.5 percent per year. The contract was written, however, so that actual increases in the first year would come to less than six percent. At the time that members of the National Association of Letter Carriers and the Postal Workers Union voted down the contract and threatened a nationwide postal strike, the latest inflation figures indicated that consumer prices might be rising by as much as 10.8 percent this year. Faced with the prospect of having their standard of living bashed by inflation, it is little wonder that the postal workers felt mad.

And consider the context in which they acted. George Meany, seeming to repudiate the leaders of the AFL-CIO unions that negotiated the postal contract, urged the rank-and-file to reject it. His action seemed designed to sabotage the one success the Carter administration inflation-fighters have had in keeping wage increases at or below the target figure of seven percent a year. Elsewhere in the economy, wage contracts negotiated in 1978 call for first-year increases averaging 9.9 percent, led by the mine workers' huge increase of 12.8 percent. The postal union leaders may

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have been willing to settle for wage increases that would help the administration fight inflation, but other national unions aren't. Why should a postal worker be more patriotic than George Meany? The decision to reject the contract also came in a context of increasing strike activity by public employees—most recently by Memphis policemen. If cops are willing to let crooks run wild in order to achieve their wage demands, what's so bad about letting the mail pile up?

All of the above may seem perfectly logical to a postal worker, but it will be terrible public policy if the Postal Service now makes major wage concessions to the workers in order to avoid a strike. The fact is that postal workers are very well paid, even overpaid. They are basically semi-skilled workers, and they earn more than most other workers of comparable skill. Their average hourly wage rate as of March 1978 was $8.02. Brewers made $9.04, steelworkers, $9.49, and auto workers, $8.32. Coal miners now average $9.58. But postal workers are ahead of printing and publishing employees, who average $6.37; tire manufacturing workers, at $7.35; telephone employees, at $7.23 and railway workers, at $7.69. The postal workers get paid more than most lumber workers, electrical workers, tobacco, food, transportation, metal, furniture, glass and chemical workers, and they are way ahead of employees of mail order houses, banks and insurance companies. All manufacturing employees in the US average just $6.03 per hour. All private-sector employees average $5.63.

Not only do postal workers make more than most private industrial workers, but they have been increasing their margin every year. Since 1971, postal salaries have increased 86.9 percent, compared to 64 percent for non-farm workers generally. On top of that, postal workers are blessed with some of the best fringe benefits in the nation—even better than those in the federal civil service. Postal salaries also are higher than federal civil service salaries.

To Our Readers

Although we are optimistic about the early conclusion of negotiations between the postal unions and the Postal Service, the possibility of a postal strike remains. If the mails are not in operation when we complete an issue, *TNR* obviously will not mail that issue. The staff writers and contributors nonetheless will be producing articles each week and if we cannot mail, that material will be included in a later, larger combined issue. We mention this only to alert you to a contingency we hope won't happen.

Robert J. Myers, Publisher

Postal workers may feel the contract they rejected was a dirty deal because it failed to protect their standard of living against inflation. But the truth is that the American people in the past have been very generous to their mailmen, and this in itself has been a cause of inflation. Labor is responsible for 86 percent of total postal costs, and increased postal wages are the principal reason for continued increases in postal rates. From May 1971, when first class went (think of it!) from six cents to eight cents, until the latest jump to 15 cents, the cost of sending a letter has risen 88 percent, well ahead of the 60 percent increase in prices in the overall economy.

Postal rate increases cause people to look for alternative ways of getting messages delivered, and they are increasingly finding them, in express services, facsimile machines and electronic fund transfers. It is against the law for anyone but the Postal Service to deliver first class mail, but Congress is considering amendment of the Private Express Statutes to permit private delivery of "urgent" letters that the government can't get delivered by the next day.

Some experimentation with competitive mail services seems desirable—in any event, it is inevitable—but continued excessive postal wage and rate increases, or a postal strike, will accelerate the process before its consequences are fully clear. There is reason to question whether the nation should want wide-open competition in mail delivery. If private companies grab off lucrative markets in high-density business districts and wealthy residential areas, the Postal Service will be left to serve rural areas and the slums. If Postal Service volume falls, per-unit cost will rise and the users of the service—those in rural and poverty areas—will have to pay more for it. Beyond social costs, there are questions of management and security. If the nation is having a bad time when postal workers are represented by unions of the AFL-CIO, what would it be like if private carriers were unionized by, say, the Teamsters? Even George Meany might want to think about that.

The country can't afford a major wage concession in the new round of postal bargaining and it ought not stand for a strike if workers continue to be dissatisfied with new wage offers or an arbiter's decree. We do not categorically oppose strikes by public employees. Clearly, conditions can become so intolerable that striking, even illegally, is the only recourse. But there is nothing intolerable about the postal service. The pay is good, the fringe benefits are great and the contract protects workers against being laid off. In view of that, the government would be entirely justified in firing anyone who strikes. But we trust matters will not come to that. The July inflation figures have moved well out of double-digit range, and so pressure for a big wage increase should be off. We hope that the administration will do what it can to make the postal settlement non-inflationary, and that George Meany, for a change, will keep quiet.

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Correspondence

A protest

To the editors:

Although I enjoyed Eliot Marshall's discussion of the psychiatric profession, ("It's All in the Mind," *TNR*, Aug. 5 & 12), I found one of his remarks extremely offensive.

"When the psychiatrist . . . gets into the business of renovating personalities," he writes, "he must share the marketplace with some very primitive practitioners of soul-care. He must work side by side with Catholic priests and masseurs and astrologers."

Mr. Marshall would do well to read some Thomas Aquinas and Augustine. He might even go on to read their mentors Aristotle and Plato. The understanding of human psychology which informs the training of a Roman Catholic priest may have ancient roots. Primitive it is not.

The contempt evident in Mr. Marshall's remark is all too indicative of one species of religious bigotry that remains socially acceptable within this country's liberal intelligentsia.

Paul A. Rahe
Assistant Professor
Cornell University

Groping in the dark

To the editors:

Eliot Marshall's excellent article, "It's All in the Mind" (*TNR*, Aug. 5 & 12), leaves unexamined another critical issue in the uncertain status of psychiatry and related professions. That is, we do not yet know enough to do the things which such professions attempt to do. No one knows enough.

The development of traditional medicine was based upon the accumulation of hard, scientific knowledge. Knowledge of body structure and chemistry, micro-organisms and their function, etc. Prior to such understanding, physicians were busy with such therapies as draining blood from their patients. Indeed, James Conant has argued that "It is probable that only within this century have medical men and surgeons helped more people than they have injured" (*Modern Science and Modern Man*).

It is not clear that mental therapists are yet helping more than they are hurting. "Patients" improve at about the same rate, independent of the type of "therapy" or qualifications of the therapist. How else could it be when we as yet have, alas, no clear notion of what causes the problems which psychiatrists would treat, whether depression or violence or unpredictable behavior or whatever? When you are shooting in the dark, it doesn't make too much difference who is doing the shooting.

Psychiatrists and other such therapists have far more than an "image problem." We have found them out. We have discovered that they pretend to know what no one knows. They have prospered from our sufferings and we have let them do it because of our desperate need to believe that someone can make right the things that go so terribly wrong in our lives and the lives of those we love.

But no one knows enough to do that. At least no one knows how to do it much better than anyone else. Perhaps we are now ready to face such harsh reality. If we are, I hope that we will not despair, but will rather have the wisdom to turn the resources we now squander in search of "therapy" to the more important search for basic understanding of why we are what we are and do what we do. Then perhaps someday we will be able to treat behavioral and emotional problems with the same effectiveness with which we now treat broken bones and infections.

Lloyd R. Young
Springfield, Missouri

Shrinking image

To the editors:

Your suggestion ("It's All in the Mind," *TNR*, Aug. 5 & 12) that psychiatrists feel they are surrounded by enemies is not correct. While misunderstanding and lack of information about modern-day psychiatry are apparently widespread, enemies in the strict sense of the word are few. In fact, much of the criticism of psychiatry stems from our own efforts to challenge our methods and learn more about the complex nature of mental illness.

The American Psychiatric Association has undertaken a study of public attitudes toward psychiatry, but not for the purpose of designing a propaganda campaign to polish our image. We are acutely aware that the media's capacity to influence attitudes positively is overshadowed by their relentless ability to expose the fraudulent. Our purpose is not to have the public think well of us so that we can bask in its approbation. It is rather to make sure that people who need our services are not prevented from seeking help through lack of knowledge or through distortions of what we have to offer.

One example of harmful distortion is your implication that the so-called "psychiatric lobbies" are manipulating data from the federal employees' Blue Cross and Blue Shield program to influence decisions about national health insurance. In fact, the figures speak for themselves. After an anticipated increase in usage during the first ten years of the program, the percentage of the total payments expended for mental health benefits has in fact remained constant at between seven and eight percent for six consecutive years. All responsible authorities in the insurance field consider that a significant plateau.

The public's attitude toward us is significant only as it relates to our efforts to relieve human suffering and it will be favorable to us only if we take our responsiblity seriously. Correcting the record in the media is part of that responsiblity.

Shervert H. Frazier, M.D.
Chairperson
American Psychiatric Association

Noble tradition

To the editors:

John Osborne continues to write of Ambassador Andrew Young as spokesman for a "special constituency" of American blacks ("White House Watch," *TNR*, July 29). It is a perception

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that diminished an otherwise thoughtful commentary.

Most of us in the news business learned more than a decade ago that Martin Luther King was not merely a *black* leader, but a *civil rights* leader. And beyond the simple fact that he led a multiracial coalition, it became increasingly apparent that his concern for nonviolent conflict resolution grew out of a tradition quite apart from the black experience.

Andy Young's positions, it seems to me, are often informed by that unique King tradition. Osborne may disagree with the positions; but he ought to deal with them as something more complex than special pleading for blacks.

Don O. Noel Jr.
Hartford, Connecticut

Dumping steel

To the editors:

Your July 22 editorial, "Steel Trap," is laden with contentious statements, but one of the more flagrant concludes that foreign dumping of steel onto the American market has not been taking place.

If there is a salutory value to your editorial, it is the realization that acclamation or condemnation of "dumping" as an international trade practice is largely in the eye of the beholder.

In your view, steelmakers in the Common Market and Japan may have been selling below average costs but never below marginal cost "and so they are not selling it at a loss. . . . Under normal circumstances, foreign firms would have nothing to gain by selling steel for less than it costs to produce."

The facts clearly belie your assertions. Foreign firms have been selling steel at a loss and, in some cases, at heavy losses. Moreover, it is not a question of whether the firm has anything to gain by selling at a loss, it is merely a question of whether the foreign government which generally has a heavy investment stake in its steel industry is better off subsidizing such losses or permitting workers to be laid off. And uniformly, the answer is that foreign governments opt to keep workers employed during downturns in steel demand and to subsidize company losses.

In 1975, the largest steel producer in France lost $437 million, and some $249 million in 1976. Of the French steel industry's long and medium term debt, roughly one-fifth or $1.7 billion is owed to the government.

In Belgium out of a total steel industry indebtedness some 54 percent or about $1.1 billion is owed to the state. A German steel company recently reported losses averaging $47.60 on each ton of steel produced last year. A South African steel company reported losses of $842,950 on its steel activities during 1977. And, the British Steel Corporation, which is wholly government owned, registered losses equivalent to $857 million for its 1977 fiscal year; about $47 per ton produced.

Perhaps the definition of "dumping" is in need of modification or clarification, both domestically and internationally. But you should be wary of misrepresenting that abnormally low export prices—coupled with huge sustained losses on the part of foreign steelmakers and coupled with wholesale foreign government bail-outs—reflect normal competitive pricing behavior.

At the minimum, one should be willing to concede that certain forms of sustained dumping, encouraged by government underwriting of financial losses, can in fact have anticompetitive effects by driving rivals out of the market and then recouping the losses through higher prices earned in the absence of competition.

Frederick C. Langenberg
President
American Iron and Steel Institute

The editors reply:

Mr. Langenberg deliberately ignores the crucial distinction, made explicit in our editorial, between marginal costs and average costs. Our editorial made it clear that some European steelmakers are selling below their average costs but not below their marginal costs. In other words, they are selling at a loss, but at less of a loss than if they were not producing at all. Such sales represent rational economic behavior during a period of relatively slack worldwide demand, not any policy of systematic dumping.

Pope Pius XII

To the editors:

In "Jerusalem Diarist" (*TNR*, July 29) M.P. writes that "Pope Pius XII gave little indication of being touched by the plight of Europe's Jews under the Nazis." The evidence warrants exactly the opposite conclusion. True that the Pope was preoccupied with an anti-Bolshevik strategy, as was the Third Reich, but it is simply false to equate what may have been a separate sin of omission—namely, the Pope's failure to speak an unmistakable condemnation of the Nazis—with the greater sin of being unmoved by the atrocities of Hitler's regime. It is historical fact that Pope Pius XII directly guided the policy of protecting thousands of Jews from certain death by hiding them in monasteries, convents and even in Vatican City! More Jewish lives had been saved through the efforts of the Church even by mid-1943 than by all other religious institutions and rescue organizations combined. The Allies themselves had shameful little to show even at that late stage of the war which would have indicated a true commitment to saving what was left of European Jewry. (Among the many sources for this information is the recent book by John Toland, *Adolph Hitler*, Ballantine Books, 1977.)

Lawrence Poitevin
Long Beach, California

From their perspective . . .

To the editors:

Stanley Hoffmann brilliantly caught the contradictions within the Carter administration ("Carter's Soviet Problem," *TNR*, July 29) resulting from difficulties in applying a global approach when some of its members revert to their cold war instincts, while the Soviets persist in their own expansionist designs.

It is heartening to find someone with such a broad perspective willing to deal with regional issues in Africa and elsewhere in their own terms. Unlike too many Americans recently, he does not detect reasons for superpower confrontation in every issue. In reality most African countries would prefer a nonaligned policy if they had a choice. The stronger ones, such as Nigeria, may be in a position to be independent. The weaker states, such as Somalia, are more likely to seek assistance from any available source and to change patrons more on the basis of opportunity than ideology.

Susan Aurelia Gitelson
New York, New York

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White House Watch

Images

"How are things at old Fort Fumble?" a friend asked by telephone. The friend, a department and White House press officer during the Nixon and Ford administrations, is the Washington representative, meaning the lobbyist, of a sizable corporation. He manages a political fund contributed by the corporation's executives and is disbursing money from it to congressional candidates who, come to think of it, may be kinder to Jimmy Carter if they are elected or reelected than many of the incumbent Democrats are. The caller's Republican bias and his memories of a White House that like the present one was not admired for its skills were evident in his chuckle of appreciation when I said that things at the old stand were about as usual, not very different from what they were in his and Jerry Ford's day. Every time Carter and his crowd seemed to be pulling their act together, I said, they screwed something up. Afterward I considered calling my friend back and saying maybe I was unfair; maybe things at the Carter White House were changing more and getting better than I had indicated.

But I didn't call back. The more I thought about how things were at my friend's Fort Fumble, the stronger was a gut feeling that they had not changed much and were not going to. My reason was the reason I had for writing in 1973, after Nixon fired H.R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman and installed General Alexander Haig as the chief of staff, that the performance and atmosphere were not going to change as much as was expected. Presidents and only presidents determine the nature and tone of White House establishments. Richard Nixon's White House establishment didn't change fundamentally while he was there and it's doubtful that Jimmy Carter's will while he is President.

The prevailing wisdom or at least the prevailing impression is that Carter himself is changing in important ways and that his presidency and his administration are changing with him. Well, not quite that. The basic Carter story now being purveyed is that the real Jimmy Carter has had no cause to change. It's not that a decisive Jimmy Carter has replaced an early, indecisive Jimmy Carter or that a tough President, tough with his Cabinet heads and with Congress and with his staff subordinates, has replaced a soft President Carter. The preferred gospel is that we are seeing the real Jimmy Carter clear and whole for the first time since he ceased to be the successful candidate and became a President who appeared to fail more often than he succeeded in whatever he attempted. The change at the Carter White House, in short, is said there to be a matter of appearance rather than of substance, and none the less significant because of that.

Indeed the most fascinating aspect of the current performance at the Carter White House is that appearance is unabashedly put before substance and that the person credited with transforming the appearance is taken by some of the media and by some of his White House associates to be second in importance only to the President. Some accounts cause one to doubt that "second in importance" is the correct term. There has been nothing like it since Henry Kissinger cast his spell and often eclipsed his Presidents, Nixon and Ford.

Carter's principal image engineer since the 1960s in Georgia and the person in discussion is Gerald Rafshoon, an Atlanta and lately Washington advertising man who prefers to be called a professional communicator. At Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter's urging, he agreed last April to join the White House staff and did so July 1 after putting his Atlanta and Washington business, Rafshoon Communications, in trust. His White House role and performance will be

Drawing by Mike Peters ©1978 Dayton Daily News

examined in detail later, assuming that they continue to seem to be as important as they have seemed to be since July 1. Our subject here is not Rafshoon as Rafshoon but the phenomenon that has made him and his role seem to be more important than he says they are.

The usually cautious and well-informed *U.S. News and World Report* said on its gossip page that Rafshoon "is getting so deeply involved in White House operations that he is being referred to by many reporters as chief of staff in all but name." The "many reporters" do not include this reporter. *The Wall Street Journal* headed an editorial denouncing Carter's veto of a defense authorization bill "The Rafshoon Veto." *The Washington Post* suggested in a long account, bolstered by many quotations of Rafshoon, that he encouraged Carter to embroil himself in a controversy with Senator Edward Kennedy over national health insurance. Among Washington journalists and journalists based elsewhere, Rafshoon is in greater demand for inter-

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views than Carter is. Denied an interview after weeks of pleading, Judy Woodruff of NBC nevertheless televised a two minute ten-second account of Rafshoon's role, prowess and setbacks.

For Rafshoon and his role to be as important as he insists they aren't, you have to assume that Jimmy Carter is a total ninny. Carter surely knows, for instance, that a frequent theme in newspaper cartoons and comments across the country is that he is Rafshoon's puppet, bobbing up and down on Rafshoon's string in the hope that Rafshoon can show him how to become a convincing and reelectable President. Carter surely knows this because the White House news summary, which he is said to read with care and copiously comment upon in the margins, has told him so with merciless clarity. A particularly cruel but otherwise typical cartoon reproduced from the Dayton, Ohio, *Daily News* in the August 14 news summary had a gross caricature of Rafshoon beginning a lecture to Abraham Lincoln with, "Frankly Abe, sweetheart, you've got an image problem. Dig?" Patricia Bauer, the news summary editor, is instructed to give priority to adverse reporting and comment when for space reasons a choice has to be made between critical and favorable stuff. The result, unnoticed outside the White House, is that six days a week—Sunday is skipped—Carter and other recipients of the summary get a much more sour impression of printed and electronic coverage than readers of the newspapers normally seen in Washington and listeners to the network news shows get. This could contribute, and some White House people say it does, to the resentment of media coverage that permeates the Carter White House beneath the usual show of indifference.

What might be called the criticism scale reflected in the news summary must interest Carter and Rafshoon. Rafshoon's perceived role as image maker and faker was high on the scale but it was not at the top in August. The most fierce and frequent denunciations across the country concerned the resignation of Margaret (Midge) Costanza from the senior staff and Carter's manufacture of a $51,000 job for Robert Griffin, a protege and pal of House Speaker "Tip" O'Neill, after the President fired Griffin from the General Services Administration for insubordination. Costanza's resignation was perceived to have been forced upon her, as it was, though for better reasons than the critics realized or acknowledged. She made herself intolerable, not by her advocacy of women's and minorities' causes, but by a display of abrasive independence that no President could indefinitely endure. Rafshoon triggered the resignation but he was not, as widely thought, its instigator. Hamilton Jordan, Carter's undesignated chief of staff, decided that Costanza had to go and he finally got her out. The handling of the Griffin problem was as supine and stupid as it was reported to be. It was largely Carter's doing, and Carter's misleading version of the episode at his August 17 press conference was a disgrace to him and to the presidency. To the extent that Rafshoon was responsible for that part of the press conference performance—and he is credited with drilling Carter for his recent press conferences—it was also a disgrace to him. Fourth and lowest on the August scale of criticism, in both frequency and intensity, was the abrupt resignation from the Carter staff of Dr. Peter Bourne and the evidence and allegations of illegal drug use among White House employees that accompanied and followed his departure. Bourne afterward denied to Press Secretary Jody Powell, though so belatedly and feebly that Powell chose not to publicize the denial, that he had told *The New York Times* that there was "a high incidence" of marijuana use and occasional use of cocaine among White House employees. What could have been a serious public relations problem for Rafshoon and Powell proved up to late August to be a minor and passing problem.

John Osborne

The defense bill veto won't accomplish what Carter says he wants, or even what he really wants.

Veto Blunder

At first blush, Jimmy Carter's extraordinary veto of the 1979 defense procurement bill represents the triumph of reason over military pork barrel. Carter's opposition to the $36.9 billion authorization measure, as he presented it, was tailor-made to meet the needs of newspaper editorial writers. Here was a president confronted with a bill that not only threatened to waste two billion dollars on a military dinosaur—a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier—but also slashed programs of much greater importance to American defense. Under these circumstances, the dictates of national security as well as fiscal responsibility required the president to exercise his veto power. It seemed that finally an American president had mustered the courage to take on the "carrier lobby" on Capitol Hill to strike a blow for a more rational defense budget.

But as the facts concerning the defense bill have surfaced, it has become clear that the White House committed a major blunder. Even if the House of Representatives votes next week to sustain the veto, Carter's decision could prove to be the most serious of his many mistakes in the area of foreign defense policy. It is not difficult to demonstrate why this is so.

In justifying the veto to White House reporters two weeks ago, Carter made three arguments. First, he said,

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the Navy does not need a new, large-deck carrier. Second, inclusion of such a carrier in the 1979 military hardware budget would undermine plans to build a larger, less vulnerable surface fleet. Third, in order to find money for the unnecessary warship, Congress had taken a meat ax to several important programs intended to improve American fighting ability in Western Europe and to accelerate research and development for new weapons.

None of these claims stands up to rigorous scrutiny. For a start, the case against large-deck carriers is far from conclusive. Critics of the massive vessels are fond of arguing that huge carriers are sitting ducks for the Soviets' new long-range anti-ship missiles. Some analysts also contend that the growth of Soviet naval power has made the mission of "sea control" (the protection of vital sea lanes) a much more important naval task than "projection" (the use of carrier-based air power against targets on land). Accordingly, advocates of this school of thought recommend that the Navy should get out of the carrier business and concentrate on building a larger number of smaller warships that would patrol critical ocean trade routes.

The problem with this argument is that the large-deck carrier is probably the least vulnerable ship in the Navy's current inventory. Soviet precision-guided missiles do pose new defensive problems for carriers, but all other surface vessels are just as vulnerable. Only carriers are large enough to employ interceptor aircraft, surface-to-air missiles and electronic countermeasures to defend against attacks that would overwhelm smaller vessels. The role of the Navy may be changing, but it is not at all clear that the "projection" mission is obsolete. In fact, as the United States has effectively ceased to be a land power in Asia and other third-world regions, the ability to launch air attacks from the sea has become more important than before. This fact was vividly illustrated during the 1973 Middle East war. In any future military crisis in the Persian Gulf, for instance, carriers would give the United States a vital means of influencing the outcome.

As it happens, this debate over the role of carriers is really academic because nobody disputes the fact that the Navy will maintain a force of 12 carriers through the year 2000. The actual stake in the veto controversy is what type of new carriers the Navy should buy. Congress has authorized a fourth "Nimitz-class" nuclear carrier, weighing 90,000 tons. The Carter administration, on the other hand, is promoting a more daring concept: A smaller, 60,000-ton, conventionally-powered carrier which would be armed with a new generation of vertical take-off "jump jets." Proponents of the conventional carrier argue that this new class of ships would be far less expensive than the nuclear flat-tops and that, as a result, the Navy could actually expand its shrinking fleet by moving to the smaller, more advanced ships.

It's not clear whether the proposed conventional carrier actually would be more cost-effective than another Nimitz-class ship. Estimates of the cost of building a new conventional carrier have grown over the past year; the Navy now says the cost would exceed $1.5 billion. If the cost of operating the conventionally driven ship over its 30-year lifespan is also taken into account, the budgetary difference between the conventional carrier and the nuclear one is insignificant. And the larger nuclear carrier would be equipped with more ammunition and 30 additional combat aircraft.

But even if the conventionally powered carrier would be a better buy, the Carter veto, ironically, has made it more difficult for the Navy to exercise this option; this because the bill he vetoed contains a carefully crafted compromise, engineered by Senator Gary Hart, which gives the naval traditionalists another nuclear carrier but also directs the Pentagon to begin work on vertical take-off fighters for use aboard a future generation of conventional ships. By vetoing the bill, Carter has not only nullified this compromise but very likely has ruined the chances of Hart and other innovative thinkers on Capitol Hill to gain backing in years ahead for defense concepts that the White House says it supports.

If Carter's opposition to the nuclear carrier is a red herring, how does one explain the veto? Certainly, it was not prompted by the cuts that Congress made in the other defense programs. Earlier in the summer, Carter himself was willing to spend over one billion dollars on a new carrier (although he now says he will wait until next year to ask for the funds). Most of the money to cover the cost of the proposed nuclear flat-top did not come from the budgets of the Army and the Air Force, as Carter asserted, but from delaying for a year the purchase of a $912 million Trident missile submarine. The administration supported the congressional decision to cut out the Trident, because construction delays in the submarine program ruled out the production of another boat this year anyway. Congress did cut back on weapons programs for the Army and Air Force, but these reductions totaled $200 million, rather than the one billion dollar figure cited by Carter. Carter is also guilty of exaggerating congressional cuts in the area of research and development: the R&D budget was slashed by all of 2.3 percent, leaving over $12.2 billion for work on new weapons. This represents the largest one-year increase in military R&D since World War II.

It is difficult, then, to avoid concluding that the veto was motivated by a desire on the part of Carter and his advisers to exercise some political muscle with the Congress. But this was not merely a "Rafshoonian" device to give Carter a new, decisive image. There are good reasons to believe that the veto also was meant to serve a deeper purpose. Simply put, it was to end congressional tinkering with the nuts and bolts of American defense policy.

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The tendency for Congress to get deeply involved in the intricacies of presidential defense proposals is not new, but in the aftermath of Vietnam it has grown rapidly. With larger staffs and expert advice from bodies like the Congressional Budget Office, the Armed Services and Defense Appropriations committees have gotten into the habit of reviewing and often revising nearly every single line item contained in the Pentagon's massive annual request. As was the case with Carter's fiscal year 1979 budget requests, the vast majority of these congressional changes are harmless. For example, this year Congress decided that the Air Force, rather than the Army, should have control of a $20 million program to modernize the long-range Pershing tactical missile. But defense officials, including Harold Brown, believe that in the longer term, congressional "micromanagement" of the defense budget threatens the ability of the president to chart a course for American national security policy and to take steps to implement it.

It may well be time to reassess the degree to which Congress rearranges the defense budget every year. But the congressional habit of poking into the nooks and crannies of Pentagon operations is not simply caused by skepticism of the defense establishment due to Vietnam. It also reflects doubts on Capitol Hill about Jimmy Carter's competence in dealing with national security problems. Unfortunately, rather than triggering a useful debate over Congress and national security policy, Carter's explanation for his veto of the defense authorization bill has only muddied the waters. Insiders now predict that when the House returns from its recess on September 7, Carter will succeed in having the veto sustained. But in winning the battle, he may lose the war. Not only has the Congress been given greater incentive to second-guess the Pentagon during next year's budget debate, but there can now be little doubt that Carter's handling of defense will emerge as a central issue in the 1980 election.

Richard Burt

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Why people are turning conservative.

The Right Menace

by Irving Howe

The main thrust of American social and political thought since World War II has been toward the right. There have been interruptions, of course. For six or seven years the new left took center stage and conservative ideologues went into retreat, partly because some of them, headed by Irving Kristol, had imprudently endorsed Richard Nixon as the candidate of "prudence." (I assume that conservative thinkers drawn to theologies of Guilt can yield to the smaller experience of shame.) Now, in the 1970s many of the themes first announced in the 1950s by rightward-moving publicists are being rehearsed again, though usually at a lower intellectual level.

There is one major reason for this rightward turn. The reason is Communism. Stalinist politics have been a dominant energy in the world these past several decades, and a severe reaction was predictable. Those of us opposed to conservatism must acknowledge the unavoidability, even the rough "justice," of this reaction. Historically, it is their turn. Faded conservative arguments take on new plausibility, in some eyes, after the crimes of Stalinism and the failures of Social Democracy. It is a worldwide reaction. In France young intellectuals declare as revelation ("socialism *is* Gulag") notions that seemed simplistic when Max Eastman came out with them in 1940. But that's Paris.

In America there is another deep if seldom acknowledged reason for the rightward turn. The reason is a new feeling about the blacks. There were high, no doubt excessive, hopes in the early 1960s that we were entering an era of good feeling. Now, it seems not just to gutter whites, all that has been blasted to hell. Many blacks seem lost in demoralization, pathology, crime. The black community appears leaderless. The self-destructive ideology of "black power" has come to little. And the expectation, perhaps foolish, that blacks would simply adapt to the styles and manners of middle-class whites has been dashed.

This, I'm afraid, is the way many people, intellectuals among them, feel about the blacks. Good feelings?—

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light years away. These whites have not reckoned with the tremendous difficulties that a true integration of white and black might have brought, nor with the still greater difficulties that failure to achieve such an integration has indeed brought. They have not reckoned with the social costs of our unwillingness as a society to remedy the unmeasured handicaps of millions of blacks. They have not reckoned with the despair which the "uncompleted revolution" has brought to blacks, including, for understandable reasons, those whose conditions have improved these recent years.

This attitude may not exactly be racism, though there are signs of that too. It does reflect an unspoken persuasion that the "black problem" is beyond solution. (Conservatives, especially if Oakeshotten, take pleasure in the thought that problems are really beyond solution, for it satisfies their craving for a complex universe.) Even among people who believe they are sympathetic toward blacks, this persuasion gives rise to sentiments of despair, sometimes disdain. Walk through Times Square or certain streets in Detroit, and see if you can free yourself entirely from this despair, even this disdain. If you are a serious liberal or socialist, or simply a humane person, you will struggle against such sentiments. But it is hard not to succumb to these emotional equivalents, inchoate presentiments, of that conservatism represented by Edward Banfield's benighted notions about the poor and James Wilson's sheriff-like prescriptions for handling crime. Getting tough is the best way not to think, and this kind of thought comes to little more than getting tough.

There is a third reason for the rightward turn. The welfare state, or the skimpy version that we have had in America these last four decades, has obviously encountered serious difficulties, some foreseen, others not. These difficulties, by and large, are the consequence of social and economic progress, a genuine improvement in the lives of most Americans; yet they also provide opportunities for conservative counterattack, a little of it serious, a lot demagogic. The conservative counterattack proposes, in effect, a rollback of the welfare state—and perhaps, if the first blows succeed, a virtual destruction of its welfare and reform measures.

A fourth reason for the rightward turn is the dreamlike quality of the 1970s, as if the years had passed but time did not move. Perhaps this has been a result of the weariness and disillusionment, with its tawdry ethic of the first person singular, which is a legacy of the late 1960s. The period of the new left saw the rise and then tragic waste of social idealism, but it also saw an indulgence in foolish sectarianism. A whole generation that should have taken the lead in moving toward social change was burned out. Waste is the name of American radicalism.

Many Americans were frightened by the hullaballoo of the late 1960s. Opportunities for major reform were frittered away in verbal violence, dopey irrationalism, apocalyptic gesture. You cannot go through such an experience without suffering—and inducing in others—a social-political hangover. People harden, become afraid, close their hearts. Many intellectuals, once socialist or even further left, were frightened by the new left experience, for it was perhaps the stupidest new left tactic to direct the fiercest blows against those who were politically closest.

Nevertheless, there were shameful public events which drove idealistic young people into the trap of nihilism. Those who lent themselves to, or failed sufficiently to fight, the catastrophes of Nixon, Vietnam, Watergate must share responsibility for this waste of social energy. It is also true that we pay for the absence of a democratic left in this country by having to put up with recurrent eruptions of an antidemocratic "left."

The conservative intellectuals wanted a politics of civility, and so do I, insofar as it remains within reach of my fallen nature. Still, I find myself wondering why their anger at the incivility of new left students was so much sharper than their anger at government officials who ordered the terror bombings in Vietnam and Cambodia while often lying about what they were doing. Civility is a desirable norm of democratic politics, but there are occasions when politics need the vigor that comes from a momentary suspension of that norm. The conservative intellectuals lacked the imagination for (or suppressed the memory of) those calculated rudenesses that insurgent groups must sometimes employ if they are to be heard at all. An attachment to civility can too easily lead to social deafness.

A fifth reason for the recent growth of conservatism in America is a new sophistication among the corporations, which have finally come to see, not so much that ideas count, but that intellectuals can come in handy.

The principal target of the new conservative offensive is the welfare state. Undoubtedly it has helped to save American capitalism. Many capitalists see the welfare state as an enemy, but some conservative thinkers know better. Sophisticated chaps like Irving Kristol understand that some form of welfare state is necessary if the capitalism they wish to protect is to endure; they simply propose to keep the welfare segment of it on short rations.

Coming:

Morton Kondracke on
the Camp David summit.

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By the welfare state I mean a capitalist economy still dominated by the interplay of private property and corporate owners, but one in which economic policy is to some extent publicly controlled and the freedom of property owners to dispose of their wealth is politically limited. The state performs at least two functions here. It steps in to modulate the excesses of the economy, helping to create rationality and order, and thereby to save capitalism from its own tendency to destruction. And it steps in to provide humanizing reforms, as a response to insurgent groups and communities.

By its very nature the welfare state cannot long maintain an equilibrium. It is always subject to serious inner conflicts. It becomes vulnerable to the attacks of newly enfranchised or empowered groups, as well as the counterattacks of traditional ruling elites which turn against it as soon as they have been brought to new confidence by its ministrations.

The American welfare state is a frail construct. It is frail in comparison to the more generous development of its counterparts in certain European countries, and frail when seen against the potential beneficence that the proper use of American wealth could bring about. Nevertheless, it has achieved some successes in humanizing capitalist society and cushioning the blows that society periodically delivers to people spread across the lower levels of the income scale. Social security, unemployment insurance, old age pensions, medical programs: these benefits, notwithstanding some flaws, have made life better for millions of people.

I want to insist on this point, for here most conservative ideologues go mute. William Buckley seems not to care much about help during the months one cannot get a job: that never has been his problem. More sensitive and reflective conservatives ought to be pressed, however. Have not *these* interventions of society into the economy improved the lives of millions of people? And if so, is it not conceivable that others might too?

There have been failures in the welfare state. Unavoidably so. Some failures are due to the fact that social reforms, even when meant to serve the common good, can easily be twisted—by stacked federal agencies, by corrupt local governments—to serve private ends. Still more: the welfare state often functions in accordance with the priorities of maldistributed wealth (the recent history of housing is a major example) simply because it functions within the bounds and accepts the norms of the corporate economy. The state may on occasion act as a countervailing force to the dynamic of that economy, but the latter is usually powerful enough to tame the former.

Some failures of the welfare state are due to inadequate support. Pat Moynihan, who edges close to the new conservatism, has written: "The social reforms [of the mid-1960s] had been oversold and, with the coming of the war, *underfinanced to the degree that seeming failure could be ascribed almost to intent.*" (Emphasis added) Nathan Glazer, a good man fallen among conservatives, writes that in "Great Society" innovations like Model Cities and Community Action there was "not very much money." In 1972, for instance, Model Cities spent all of $500 million, and one reason, he admits, this program did not live up to expectations was "lack of money."

It has become fashionable to say "you can't solve problems by throwing money at them," a proposition at least as indisputable as "a stitch in time saves nine." But it is also true, and right now far more important, that without spending money (you don't have to throw, you can lob it), social problems cannot be solved. We don't even have an adequate idea of what a decent social expenditure would be in America, so impoverished is our collective imagination by the skewed priorities of Pentagon excess, advertising waste and regressive taxes. All discussion of the costs of proposed social measures is distorted by a reactionary calculus that figures the costs but fails to consider the benefits. A dollar the government spends on health care is a "bad" thing, even if it replaces a dollar or more that would otherwise be spent in the private sector. By contrast, we ignore the enormous dollar costs to the economy—I leave aside the merely human costs—of the level of unemployment that is now coming to be accepted as inevitable.

Other failures of the welfare state are indeed a result of the waste, inefficiency and corruption alleged against it. No defender of social change need have the slightest hesitation in admitting this, or accepting the necessity for sharper audits, greater controls. But analytical care is needed. Rip-offs by doctors in Medicare programs, widely publicized in the last few years, are not a necessary aspect of medical welfare; they result from provisions built into the Medicare system which encourage this version of "private enterprise"; similar rip-offs do not occur in the British health system, whatever its flaws.

Still other failures of the welfare state, as one might expect, result from poor experiments, ordinary human weakness, unforeseen difficulties. That the solution to some problems casts up new problems is a thought which must surely have occurred to someone before *The Public Interest* was founded. The suggestion that the public search for solutions should be abandoned is perhaps new.

It is a common theme of conservatism to urge caution, even inaction, on the ground that action leads to unforeseen and usually undesirable consequences. No doubt. But what this wisdom fails to add is that sloth, delay, the failure to act—act, say, in behalf of our dying cities and unemployed black youth—must also lead to undesirable consequences that are quite foreseeable.

The welfare state, I would say, is entering its second stage. The first stage, though it met with bitter

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Business and the rational mind, Part V

Innovative self-destruction•Engines of change•An alternative to planned chaos

Capitalism—or democratic capitalism, or a system of free choice, or whatever you choose to call the U.S. economic system—is perhaps the most dynamic paradox around.

Like democracy, it is the worst system except for all the other systems mankind has tried.

Like mankind itself, it spends a lot of time on the ropes, but it always bounces back.

Because of the mixed economy that has resulted from government intervention, our system has been called "capitalism in an oxygen tent." But reports of its death are greatly exaggerated.

It survives by a process of innovative self-destruction. Which is to say, democratic capitalism compulsively develops new and better ways of doing things. Thus it makes obsolete the very practices that strengthened it in an earlier time.

This process is, by its very nature, endless. In a free society, mankind's entrepreneurial spirit tells him he has to improve on existing products and processes and procedures if he is to create a competitive edge for himself, or even just to meet competition. Thus is relentless improvement built into the system.

This perpetual change is one of the main reasons that what we loosely call capitalism is so hard to define. It is also the main reason that what passes for capitalism in some countries is such a far cry from the dynamic democratic capitalism to which we Americans are accustomed—imperfect but always trying to correct its imperfections. And always learning from experience, even when it learns the hard way.

The stern discipline that compels productive innovation is the requirement that a privately owned business earn a profit—i.e., that it meet a need and meet it efficiently enough to have something left over to meet tomorrow's needs. The system polices itself pretty well, overall; private businesses that cannot achieve the requisite efficiency usually go under.

In a state-controlled economy, you have just the opposite. Not being required to earn a profit, government businesses have little interest in holding down costs. They tend to develop a single objective: status quo and self-preservation at all costs. Those costs become increasingly higher as such organizations strive toward political, rather than economic, objectives.

Thus an essential difference between government and private businesses is the difference between rigidity and creativity. Economic systems run by government tend, by their doctrinal nature, to be static, because any departure from dogma is labeled heresy. This produces a static situation, but static socialism is still socialism.

Static capitalism, on the other hand, would be a contradiction in terms. Capitalism cheerfully occupies itself with a continuing confession of error as it labors to outdate yesterday's improvements. It tends to question the validity of all revealed wisdom that locks itself into any tight doctrine not supported by experience and common sense. It operates on the old Army doctrine that if you're comfortable, you're out of position.

Democratic capitalism is a form of institutionalized self-interest in which most large corporations have to serve a very large mass market if they are to survive and prosper. This makes them democrats of the marketplace, in contrast to those who seem to fear the decisions free people will make if left to their own devices.

Those who argue for a dominant role for government in our economy maintain that an economy that is not centrally planned and heavily regulated is necessarily chaotic. They don't seem to grasp that our system is a continuing revolution, and revolutions are almost invariably untidy. The bureaucrat's impulse is to try to neaten things up, which seldom serves the consumer's interest.

Capitalism, with all its imperfections and its driving ebullience, admittedly spends much of its life in an untidy state of cliff-hanging crisis—just as mankind always has. But indices used to measure the state of the U.S. economy indicate that the fabulous invalid has survived another bout of illness and, with proper nourishment and the right amount of constructive neglect, will pull through again. Which should be good news for all of us, especially for those still struggling to work their way out of poverty.

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resistance from corporate interests, some intellectuals and Robert Frost, was relatively simple: we legislated in the 1930s some social reforms that many capitalist countries in Europe had managed to live with since the early years of the century. American liberals and radicals in the late 1920s and early 1930s knew precisely which "immediate demands" they wanted to put forward. In doing so they helped prepare the way for the New Deal. Today everything is more complicated. There is the vexing problem of inflation; there is the threat of a decline in economic growth; there is a demoralizing sense, which conservatism feeds upon and reinforces, that our problems have become intractable. We have a strong awareness of the troubles of the welfare state, but apart from overdue immediate demands (for instance, national health insurance) it becomes harder to articulate these troubles as precise issues or proposals. The next step begins to look like "structural" reforms that would bite a little deeper into the "prerogatives" of the corporations. Ralph Nader speaks about the extension of democracy to within the corporation, so that workers and consumers might have a voice in making decisions; Robert Lekachman speaks about the need to redistribute income, become especially acute when economic growth has slowed down and we may not be able to count on a mounting GNP to bring a little more to everyone; Michael Harrington speaks about the need for "social control of credit" in order to bring the investment policies of banks into line with commonly accepted needs and values. We are approaching dangerous territories. The corporations are right to be nervous.

Which brings us back to my last reason for today's rightward turn: a new sophistication among corporations about the uses of ideology and the handiness of intellectuals. Irving Kristol has been telling them that intellectuals, jealous of expense accounts, yachts and other perquisites, want to challenge the authority of the corporations; he summons the corporations to a new militancy and cleverness, with the implication that there will be some intellectuals prepared to help—as indeed there will be. Suddenly a raft of new "institutes," "research centers" and magazines appears. Ben Wattenberg, the glossy Pangloss of the dead center, finds powerful sponsors to help spread his words of cheer. The literary shrewdness of Mobil and Exxon institutional advertising strikes the eye.

This is an interesting, probably important, new development in our political life. It comes at a moment of coarser signs too: my friends in the trade union movement tell me that not in 40 years have they encountered such aggressive efforts by employers to break unions. At long last the American bourgeoisie is being taught the ideology of class consciousness. As you might expect, its teachers are often ex-radicals. Talk about the "cunning of history!"

There is conservative thought that is traditional, serious and worthy of consideration. But what is happening in America now, though reinforced by the conservative ideologues, is something else again. It is the start of a crude, mean-spirited, demagogic attack on the welfare state, a kind of class struggle by some of the haves against many of the have-nots.

The main conservative outcry has been against government intervention into economic life: "federal bureaucrats telling us what to do." It is a slogan always likely to find a response among the middle class, for it invokes a cherished American tradition of Emersonian individualism, which still can be manipulated into a vision of an America proud and independent, with entrepreneurs freely competing against one another.

There are three problems with this vision. First, this America in which the government left its citizens happily free to enjoy the wonders of free enterprise has been a mirage at least since the Civil War. The state has intervened actively into economic life, since the building of the great intercontinental railroads. It has provided innumerable kinds of aid to business interests, from tariffs to tax breaks to direct and indirect subsidies. The notion of a private economy composed of small businesses in vigorous competition has been fantasy for about as long a time. In the age of late capitalism, with its overwhelming concentration of wealth and power, the vision of a *laissez-faire* society of individual entrepreneurs is nothing more than a handy myth for conservative ideologues. It serves the same function for them that the myth of "the withering away of the state" serves Marxist ideologues.

Second, attacks on government intervention occur mainly when the issue is social legislation on behalf of the disadvantaged or regulation to protect individuals from corporate excesses. Corporate interests and conservative spokesmen rarely find intolerable those violations of the "free market" which bring them substantial benefits, such as trade protectionism, tax preferences and regulations that shield corporations from the rigors of competition with one another.

Conservative ideologues were not heard to complain in March, for example, when President Carter authorized vigorous federal intervention in the market for copper (as they had not complained when the federal government bailed out Lockheed and Penn Central). "Under pressure from the copper industry and western political leaders" (according to *The Washington Post*), Carter agreed to have the government buy 225,000 tons of copper at a cost of $250 million, in order to help wipe out a world surplus that was depressing the copper producers' profits. The aftereffects of Proposition 13 in California have demonstrated, by contrast, that when calls for lower government spending are heeded, it is the schools and libraries that are curtailed.

Third, the trend toward increasing interpenetration of state and economy is all but inevitable. It is part of an inner, largely autonomous drive of late capitalist

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society to find a way of simultaneously achieving social stability and maximum profits. The crucial political-social question for our time becomes: Under whose social auspices does this drive toward economic collectivism occur? Will it serve the interests of corporate hegemony or will it be modulated politically in behalf of democratic and egalitarian values?

These points are reinforced by Michael Harrington:

> *Under the conditions of late capitalism, the government is already engaged in underwriting—and in a sense socializing—the losses and risk capital of the giant corporations . . . Washington is, in effect, nationalizing broken-down, losing railroad lines while permitting the profitable systems to make even more money. Moreover, business wants tax revenues to provide it with cash for investment. And in 1976 the government was paying for 62 percent of the nation's research and development, the results of which are turned over to the corporations for private exploitation. There are proposals on the board to provide one hundred billion in easy money for the energy industry so that it can correct the calamities it did so much to generate.*
>
> *Therefore the question is not, as corporate ideologists often pretend, whether Washington will keep its hands off the private sector.* Big business wants the government to intervene, *but only to federalize risks and losses, and not to shape the profits or take part in the decision making.*

Those of us who want social reforms that could lead to an improved welfare state would be foolish to deny that there are accompanying serious problems. Of course there are limits to feasible taxation, though it is by no means clear that we have reached these limits in the United States, especially if, unlikely as it now seems, a truly progressive tax system were introduced. Of course there is a serious problem of bureaucracy, though it is hard to know how much of the outcry against it derives from genuine experience and how much is stimulated by propaganda.

Bureaucracy is hardly unique to the welfare state. It can be found in rich bloom among the very corporations that print advertisements denouncing governmental bureaucracy. It can be found in Communist, fascist and democratic societies. It can be found in relatively backward societies like Egypt and Greece. Wherever you have large-scale social organization there is likely to appear a bureaucratic apparatus, sometimes serving beneficial ends, sometimes becoming a parasite on society, usually both. All this ought to be ABC; but it needs to be repeated in reply to the unscrupulous simplifications with which conservatism favors us these days. As if bureaucracy thrived only in Washington! As if they never had any down in Georgia! As if it were unknown in General Motors or the

The Two Irvings

In order to clarify a common confusion of American intellectual life, here is a brief description of the difference between Irving Howe and Irving Kristol.

Irving Howe is Distinguished Professor of English at the City University of New York, and coeditor of *Dissent*, a quarterly journal "devoted to radical ideas and the values of socialism and democracy." He writes on both literary and political subjects. His most recent books are *World of Our Fathers* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich), a cultural history of Jewish immigrants in America, and *Leon Trotsky*, part of the Viking Modern Masters series. He also has written books on Sherwood Anderson, William Faulkner and Thomas Hardy.

Irving Kristol is Henry R. Luce Professor of Urban Values at New York University, and coeditor of *The Public Interest*, a quarterly journal of generally neoconservative persuasion. Kristol's concerns are primarily political and economic. He writes a column for *The Wall Street Journal*, and is a senior fellow of the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank in Washington. His most recent book is *Two Cheers for Capitalism* (Basic).

Both Irvings were born in 1920, and both attended City College of New York in the late 1930s. At City College, Irving Howe recruited Irving Kristol into the Young People's Socialist League, the Trotskyist youth group. In his new book on Trotsky, Howe writes of his Trotskyist days: "Almost four decades have passed since that youthful experience, and since then, even though or perhaps because I have remained a socialist, I have found myself moving farther and farther away from his ideas." But Kristol's journey, it is safe to say, has been the longer one. In 1953 he was a co-founder of *Encounter*, a liberal anticommunist monthly (subsidized—without Kristol's knowledge, he says—by the CIA). By the 1970s he was an established conservative.

In short, Irving Howe is a leading intellectual voice of the left-of-liberal but anticommunist movement known as "democratic socialism." Irving Kristol is a leading intellectual voice of the movement of converts from the left known as "neoconservatism."

In future issues we will explain the difference between Irving Kristol and Sidney Hook, and between Gertrude Himmelfarb and Midge Decter.

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University of Chicago!

The notion that only government has a bureaucracy parallels the notion that the private economy is composed of rugged individual entrepreneurs. But the truth is that large organizations are an inevitable feature of late capitalism—indeed, they are likely to become larger; that bureaucracies are an inevitable feature of large organizations; and that the crucial question is whether these will or can be brought under adequate social control.

Let me indulge a heresy at this point. If a dose of bureaucracy is the price we must pay for humane social arrangements, then the price is worth paying. About half a year ago I had to deal with the Social Security bureaucracy after my father died, and I found it quite decent and efficient, certainly no worse than that of Bell Telephone or Con Edison. "For example is no proof," runs a Yiddish proverb, and I therefore make no large claims for my experience. But when I consider how very much my father's old age was eased by those bureaucracies which chaps like William Buckley find it so easy to sneer at, I want to go out into the streets and join some sort of demonstration—maybe we'll yet have one—against the current menace from the right.

People like myself, democratic socialists or socialist liberals, have learned something from traditional conservative thought—perhaps more accurately, from the ideas of the great tradition of liberalism that have been stressed by more reflective conservatives in recent years. We have learned to recognize the autonomy of politics as a realm of human activity worthy of practical and theoretical attention in its own right, and not simply as an epiphenomenon of class struggle (though it is that too). We have learned to fear excessive concentration of power in any human agency, be it the state or the corporation, trade union bureaucracies or political parties, and to value the interplay of limited powers within a democratic structure. We have come to appreciate the canniness regarding the dynamic of politics that is to be found, say, in *The Federalist Papers*. We have come to see that bureaucracy creates problems almost certain to survive the life-span of capitalism or any other social system, even if some of the roots of bureaucracy lie in the injustices of present society. We have come to recognize that a limited market might help to lubricate the social relationships that would arise in a democratic socialist society based on decentralized and largely autonomous units of production and distribution. And above all else, we value democracy as a good in itself, indeed, *the supreme good of political life*, not reducible to any particular system of "relations of production."

In recent years there have been some occasions of similar cultural response among conservatives and socialists. Like the conservatives, we socialists have looked with dismay at tendencies in American academic life to dismiss the heritage of Western culture as "irrelevant," for we were taught that a major injustice of modern society was its denial of the cultural heritage to the dispossessed and impoverished, and that one task of a democratic socialism or an insurgent liberalism is to make available the culture of the past to the plebeians of the present.

I think our sense of tradition can sometimes be richer and more vital than that of most conservatives, for we see not just The Tradition, as the New Critics and their followers tended to use that term: a heritage fixed, monolithic and patrician. We see a multiplicity of traditions, competing, replacing, interacting. Within the culture of the West we find our tradition also, voices of insurgency, radicalism, egalitarianism and protest. Unlike American know-nothings and "swingers," we share with some conservatives a deep affection for the past, but we insist that it isn't all theirs.

With the preceding gesture of (more or less) good will, and without pretending to a comprehensive discussion of conservative thought, let me focus briefly on two major concerns of conservatism as these affect directly the present struggle over the welfare state. They are, first, the relation between the economic system and political democracy and, second, the problem of equality.

Conservative voices employ a seductive mixture of slogan and argument regarding the alleged necessity for capitalism as the sole or crucial bulwark of democracy.

It is said that freedom can survive only when there are competing, more-or-less autonomous social institutions able to check the demands and excesses of one another, and that capitalism provides the best setting for satisfying that condition. By breaking down the barriers between state and society, socialism and even (say the more rigid conservatives) the welfare state tend to create a new Leviathan that must lead to regimentation.

Now, it approaches a tautology to say that a society that nationalizes its entire economy will risk an excessive concentration of power. Add a one-party regime, and the tautology seems complete. What it tells us is that Stalinism is Stalinism, and totalitarianism is totalitarianism. But if we consider the practices and proposals of democratic socialists and if we look at the facts about the welfare state, it becomes clear that the conservative argument, while possessing some cautionary value, is a simplistic deduction from an ideological system.

It is clear that capitalism does not require, nor necessarily encourage, democracy. Elements of the German bourgeoisie helped Hitler come to power; German capitalism continued to thrive once the Nazis destroyed democracy. Few capitalists resisted Hitler, fewer went to concentration camps. It was the Jews and the radicals who suffered the hell of Dachau and Buchenwald. German capitalism managed to live through the Hohenzollern monarchy, the Weimar

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republic, the Nazi years, and the Bonn republic. Nor have capitalist societies and their ruling classes shown any notable reluctance to have democracy destroyed in Italy, Japan, Argentina, Brazil or other countries. Where capitalism and democracy do manage to coexist, there are other causal factors at work, such as a high level of prosperity, an educated public, a national tradition, a vital liberalism. But capitalism can get along very well without democracy.

In countries with more ambitious and comprehensive welfare states than we have in America—Sweden, Holland, Denmark, England, Israel—there has been no concurrent erosion of political freedoms. On the contrary, these welfare states under socialist management are among the few in which democracy is secure. In fact, there has been a growth of political and social freedoms under the welfare state—though admittedly the freedom to hire labor at semi-starvation wages or the freedom of old people to starve to death for lack of pensions has been curtailed. And the reasons why democracy is so healthy in these welfare states ought to be clear: insurgent social groups, only yesterday powerless, can gain new strength; with new strength comes confidence; with confidence comes an entry into political life; and with that entry comes the stirring up of new conflicts and liveliness; the breaking down of ethnic and racial prejudices. Previously mute segments of the population, finding their voices, begin to taste the pleasures and risks of participation, and thereby deepen the foundations of democracy, even as they sometimes rattle its windows too. If there is truth to the conservative argument that a healthy democracy rests on the activity of "intermediary structures," those institutions that stand between state and individual, then in modern society the welfare state makes a genuine contribution to democracy. For—at least in part—it enfranchises and empowers the previously weak; it gives them a sense of possibility; it raises for them the vision of becoming subjects, not merely objects, of history.

Surely the same holds true for the United States these past 40 years. Despite all the cries about encroachments on liberty, we have not suffered any serious loss of liberties that can be attributed to the welfare state. Are not automobile workers freer now, with their UAW, to speak out their opinions and desires than they were in the days of Henry Ford's plant police? Are not blacks in the South freer now to speak out their opinions and desires than they were in the days of lynching and segregation? The erosions of our liberties—McCarthyism, loyalty checks, FBI and CIA escapades—have come not from the growth of the welfare state, but rather from political misconduct by elements of society that bitterly oppose the welfare state.

There have been some powerful demands for the limitation of personal liberties in recent years, but these have come mostly from conservatives alarmed by the growth of "permissiveness" and the breakdown of customary patterns of social deference. Resistance to rights for homosexuals; efforts to deny women a resort to abortion; contempt for feminist demands; proposals for censorship of pornography and obscenity; approval of wiretapping and other modes of unsolicited surveillance: these are customary subjects of conservative rhetoric—some primitive, some sophisticated. How odd it seems that conservatives who believe governmental efforts to regulate pollution or provide employment for jobless black youths or help American cities are steps toward a "statist" destruction of liberties should at the same time urge this very state to intervene actively in order to regulate matters of private morality which usually are delicate and ambiguous, and therefore best left to the persons involved.

In modern democracies, the state does not constitute the monolithic Leviathan summoned by conservative imaginations. Kenneth Arrow has pointed out:

> *As recent events in the United States have shown, even the existing political machinery is not at the disposal of the current political leadership. The bureaucracy or, better yet, the many conflicting bureaucracies are not so easily controlled. If the democratic, legal tradition is strong, there are many sources of power in a modern state. Adding functions of economic control to the present range may indeed only increase the diversity of interests and therefore alternative power sources. . . . This failure of coordination is not an unmixed blessing. But it certainly suggests that a modern state, no matter how all-encompassing, is likely to have a fully adequate range of alternative power centers, if that is an adequate protection for democracy.*

The conservative argument that democracy requires capitalism is as simplistic as the argument sometimes advanced by socialists that democracy is "fully" possible only under socialism. Democracy cannot flourish under all economic systems, but clearly it can flourish under different ones. The conservative argument, as it comes to us these days, rests upon a crude historical determinism that is a parody of Marxism, a Marxism for the right. (The best presentation of the liberal-social democratic view regarding the welfare state and political freedom, by the way, was offered by Sidney

Staff Changes

This week Jack Beatty joins *The New Republic* as literary editor. Jack's essays and reviews have appeared in *The Yale Review, Commentary, The Nation, Politicks, Saturday Review, The Boston Globe* and *Newsweek*, as well as in *TNR*. Ann Hulbert, who recently joined *TNR* as literary assistant, graduated from Harvard College and has studied at Cambridge University.

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Hook in a debate with Max Eastman 30 years ago. It is reprinted in Hook's book, *Political Power and Personal Freedom.*)

The prospect of a serious progressive income redistribution seems remote in America right now, yet this possibility seems to trouble conservatives even more than the growth of the welfare state. Threats to cash flow, however speculative, are apparently more alarming than threats to personal liberty, however allegedly immediate.

Three conservative strategies of persuasion currently cluster around this age-old and complicated issue: first, that it is socially and morally undesirable to reach a condition of human equality; second, that equality cannot really be enforced short of the destruction of freedom; and third, that no one really cares about income discrepancies except for a few intellectuals besotted by ideology and hungry for power. The last point is stressed by Irving Kristol, a writer admirable for transparency. Kristol probably is correct in saying that (right now) not many Americans care about an egalitarian redistribution of income (though many poor ones want benefits not available in any other way). But we might recall that there were probably blacks who were "content" with segregation. That the victims of an inequity don't recognize it as such, or fail to express strong resentment, hardly provides a moral justification for perpetuating it.

Neither liberals nor social democrats espouse a society in which an absolute equality of income and wealth is enforced by the state. In the Western democracies the crucial question is whether the present vast disproportions of income and wealth, and therefore of power, can be justified by the values of democracy or indeed any other values that conservatives profess. During the first, Rooseveltian phase of the welfare state there was a modest tendency toward an egalitarian redistribution of income. But according to Herman Miller, the statistician formerly with the US Bureau of the Census, "income distribution in the US has remained virtually unchanged for one-quarter of a century." The Census Bureau, in its *Current Population Reports,* informs us that in 1974, the poorest fifth of American families received 5.4 percent of national income while the top fifth received 41 percent; these figures are virtually the same as those for 1947.

Distribution of wealth statistics is harder to come by, since there is systematic withholding of information on this matter. The economist Lester Thurow, in his 1975 book *Generating Inequality,* estimates that between 1953 and 1969 the share of total wealth in America held by the top one-half of one percent of the population ranged from 20 to 24 percent, and the share of the top one percent from 25 to 29 percent. There are plenty of other statistics available, but these should serve to illustrate my point.

Now the disproportions revealed here seem to me so indefensible that I can imagine someone neither liberal nor socialist, indeed someone seriously conservative, going at least part of the way with proposals for an egalitarian redistribution. First, for the sheer justice of it, not a small reason. Second, because it would surely make stronger the social foundations of democracy.

By what social or moral principle, meanwhile, can conservative thinkers justify a situation in which, say, the great-grandchildren of Henry Ford inherit hundreds of millions for which they have done no work, indeed, done nothing but be born Fords, while millions of other Americans live out their lives in need and deprivation? (Ah, scoffs a sophisticated voice, that old socialist complaint about Henry Ford! I blush at being caught out, and continue.) How can conservative thinkers ask us seriously to believe that they support "equality of opportunity" when in fact the starting points at which "contestants" begin are so utterly different?

One common conservative justification for such extreme disproportions of income and wealth is that all of us naturally wish to pass on to our heirs the fruit of our labor or talent. This is something to which we can respond. Pass on enough to get through college; pass on enough even to buy a yacht; pass on still more, say, enough for a country home in Connecticut. But is there no limit? Does the present concentration of wealth and income constitute a sacred principle beyond change?

A 19th century social philosopher once wrote:

> *The properties of money are my own [the possessor's] properties . . . What I* am *and* can *do is, therefore, not at all determined by my individuality. I* am *ugly, but I can buy the most beautiful woman for myself. Consequently, I am not ugly, for the effect of ugliness, its power to repel, is annulled by money. . . . I am a detestable, dishonorable, unscrupulous and stupid man, but money is honored and so also is its possessor.*

This speaks to a visible reality, the reality of J. Paul Getty, Howard Hughes, H. L. Hunt, a thousand others. That the unspoken premises of this passage from Marx regarding the intrinsic worth of individuals once stripped of social rank and accidents of birth, bear a striking resemblance to values claimed by the conservatives ought to make at least a few of them think again about its truth.

Having brought in Marx, I might as well quote Rousseau:

> *By equality, we should understand, not that the degrees of power and riches are to be absolutely identical for everybody; but that power shall never be great enough for violence, and shall always be exercised by virtue of rank and law; and that, in respect of riches, no citizen shall ever be wealthy enough to buy another, and none poor enough to be forced to sell himself.*

That, with due allowance to the complexities of application, is the nub of the matter. It is the *direction* that counts.

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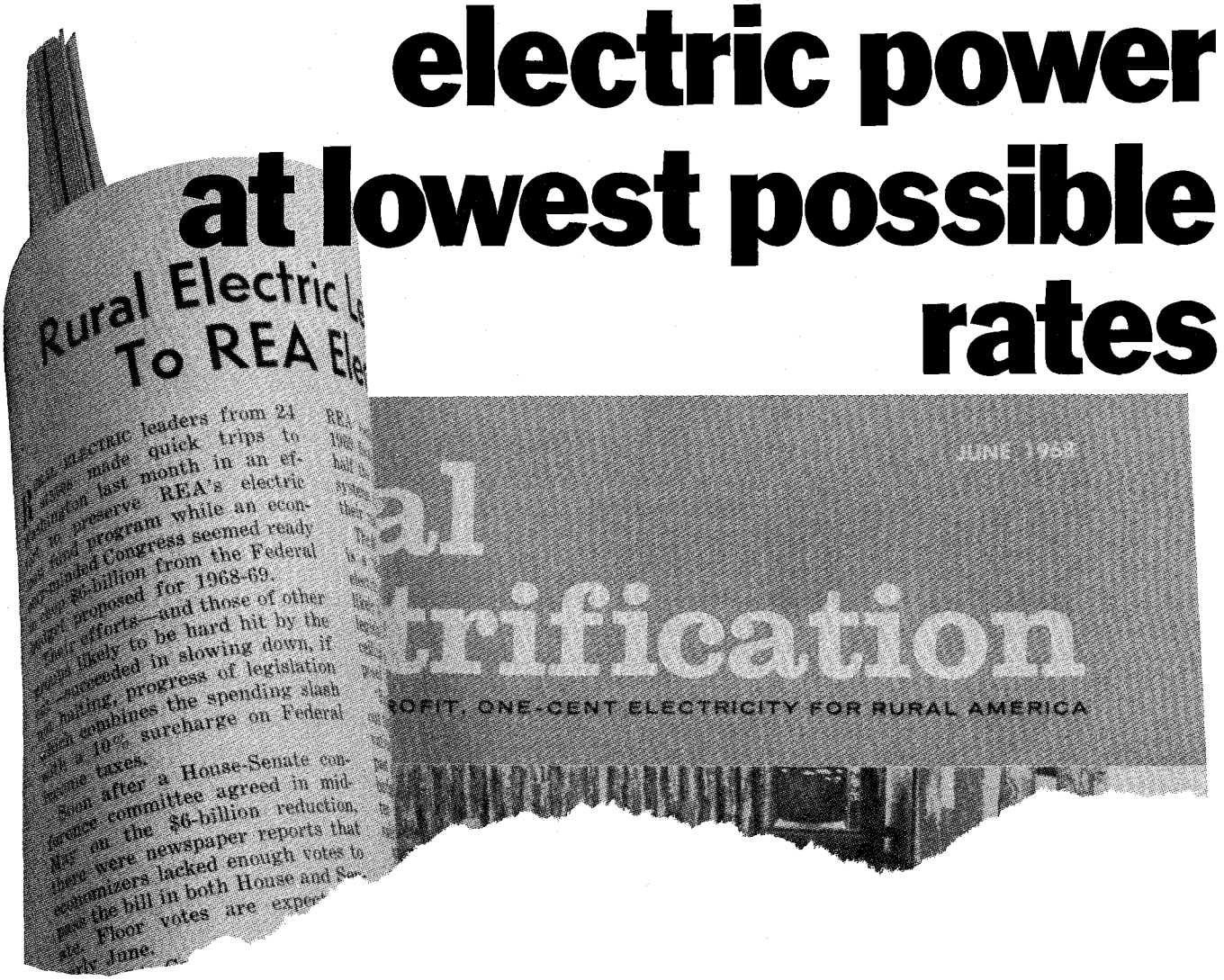

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One more conservative argument is favored these days, adorned in its fancier versions with bell-shaped curves. It is the argument of what might be called appropriate rewards. It is only just, runs this opinion, that people of outstanding gifts or those who have made remarkable contributions to humanity should receive outstanding rewards. Radicals who propose to move toward a more egalitarian society would thwart and perhaps suppress the energies of the outstanding, thereby spreading a pall of mediocrity.

But do the gifted really require as an incentive material rewards large enough to produce the degree of socioeconomic inequality that exists today? My strong impression is that most of the people who have done the most to make our life better—from Jonas Salk to George Balanchine, from Walter Reuther to Artur Schnabel—have been content with relatively modest material rewards. They may want recognition, opportunity, applause, honor; but they seldom have much interest in accumulating millions. They seem content with the sort of increments that are quite compatible with a society tilted in an egalitarian direction.

In arguing against egalitarianism, the conservatives put on a cap labelled "realism," insisting that only money talks and all else is fantasy. When they argue against the liberal stress on welfare measures, however, they shift to the cap of "idealism." Thus, the same Irving Kristol who incites corporate leaders to defend their interests against the "New Class" intellectuals speaks with the voice of traditionalist austerity to declare that: "A nation whose politics revolves around such issues as day-care centers or school lunches or the 'proper' cost of false teeth is a nation whose politics is squalid. . . ." Clucking away about the decay of moral standards, the debasement of politics to materialist conflict, the conservatives now affirm only spiritual values, with which they are intimate.

It ought to cut two ways. If Mr. Kristol and his friends are too high-minded to worry about day-care centers, school lunches and false teeth, they also ought to reflect that an egalitarian society would free many more people than our present one does from these petty concerns, and permit them to share the joys of high-minded idealism. And when you come to think of it, why should not a genuine conservative, content with his sufficient quota of goods, living a life of restrained contemplation and keeping a strict watch on his Original Sin: why should not such a conservative find a certain appeal in a vision of a moderate egalitarianism? Not a rigid or fanatical egalitarianism, but one that allows for necessary differences to compensate for dangerous or hard work and to reward achievements of exceptional value or beauty, yet discourages the gross disparities in wealth and income that now prevail?

Indeed a serious conservative ought to be tempted by this vision of moderate egalitarianism. If the conservative outlook rests on a Jeffersonian hope for a society of independent and self-sufficient citizens, then clearly, as Jefferson himself understood, it must seek to avoid the kinds of differentials in income, wealth and power that characterize late capitalism in the US.

The recent upsurge of conservatism has been accompanied by, and is partly the result of, a political and intellectual crisis of American liberalism. That crisis is due mainly to the difficulties of coping with the second phase of the welfare state. It is a serious crisis and it demands some sustained reconsiderations. But the eager voices on both far right and far left which pronounce American liberalism dead are surely mistaken, for the liberal tradition runs powerfully in this country. It has lived through earlier and perhaps greater difficulties, and it seems to be endowed with a rare gift for resurrection.

The great line of American thought remains that of romantic liberalism. Better yet, our romantic liberalism as tempered and complicated by the communal stress of Melville and the late Whitman. In its simpler versions the dominant Emersonianism and the curmudgeon individualism of Thoreau, despite a radical bent originally, now lend themselves too easily to a crude self-assertiveness, a narrow-spirited "privatism," an indifference to social obligation which are common elements of contemporary conservatism. By contrast, we can still turn with warmth to the humanely sympathetic outlook of the Melville who wrote *Moby Dick*, the Whitman of *Democratic Vistas*. I don't mean, of course, that these texts provide any political or social prescriptions, nor do I invoke the author's posthumous blessing for my ideas. But in their balancing of personal freedoms against collective obligations, in their growing awareness that the modern world requires something more complicated and even perilous than is available to the Ahabs of the 19th and 20th centuries, these writers chart a moral possibility.

Neither an ideological conservatism nor an uninflected Marxism has yet been able to find much grounding in America, and perhaps it is just as well. The central problem now is to revitalize liberalism in the context of a faltering welfare state.

If the predicted 1979 recession materializes—and the dominant powers in this country seem intent upon seeing that it does—you may be sure there will reappear a strong popular demand for effective social action sponsored and financed by the federal government (though often managed, one hopes, by decentralized and democratic agencies). The primitive conservative ideology, as it proposes a return to a *laissez faire* that never was, will crumble to nothingness. This is because it *is* nothing, a mere ideological phantasm. The sophisticated conservative strategy of enduring elements of the welfare state while steadily trying to cripple it will be a far more formidable antagonist.

A formidable antagonist requires a sharpening of thought, a gathering of strength. There is a big political fight ahead.

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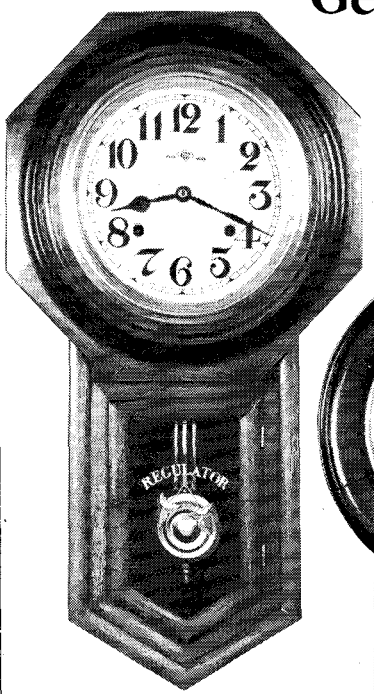

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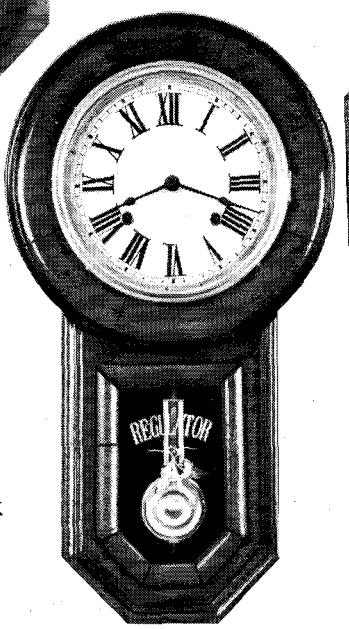

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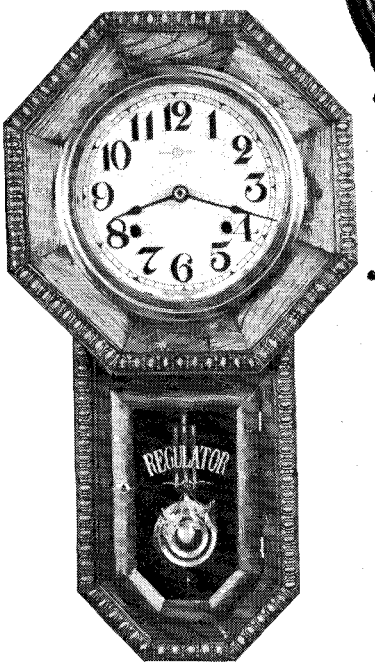

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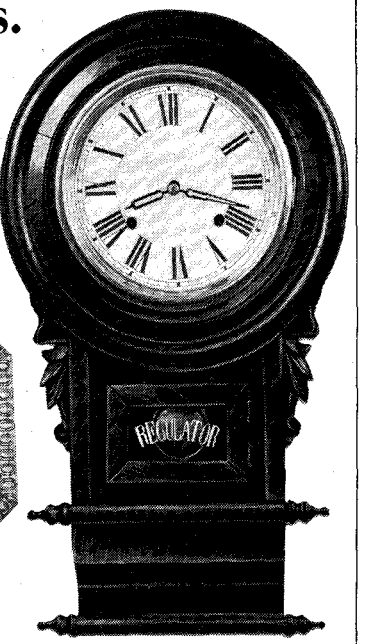

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Interior Decorating

Interiors (United Artists)

The rhetoric of seriousness is one of the subtler plagues of our time. The onset of the disease can't be specified in history, and it can't be called strictly contemporary—Bruckner's symphonies are an example of what I mean—but certainly since the middle of this century it has swollen. Pretension and unsubstantiated seriousness have always been plentiful in the arts, but the great inflater of hollow seriousness in the last three or four decades is the fact that we live in (and Auden himself must have tired of his phrase) the Age of Anxiety. It *is* a fact: I'm not quarreling with it as such. Still, the chief license now for seriousness is the mere recognition of that fact. In the past there was plenty of artificial artistic affirmation, but the making of positive or optimistic art never carried so immediate a cachet of seriousness. Now, if you just learn some strophes of whichever art you're interested in, as practiced by masters of the dark, and then plug into *Angst*, you are pretty well away. The old doctor in Shaw's *Doctor's Dilemma* says, "Chloroform has done a lot of mischief. It's enabled every fool to be a surgeon." Now accessible *Angst* has enabled a lot of merely ambitious people to believe, and to convince others, that they are operating like Camus or Beckett or Bergman or Antonioni.

Film, especially in other countries, especially during the last 20 years, has often been burdened with this empty heaviness. But—an ill wind blowing some good—the high cost of production in the US has made it rarer here. Usually the only directors who get a chance to do that sort of thing are those who have made money for producers, and not many such American directors have had an impulse toward this rhetoric of seriousness. The most prominent exception is Robert Altman; his successes enabled him to make *Images* and *3 Women*, which are typical of the papier-mâché Himalayan peaks I'm talking about.

An odd point about those two films is that they were made by a man whose best work has been in satire: *M*A*S*H* and *The Long Goodbye*. One might have thought that wit would have safeguarded him. An odd point about the latest example of the phenomenon, *Interiors*, is that it was made by a man who, also financed by past success in other veins, is one of the best of parodists, Woody Allen.

Parody is a form of criticism, of course, and it's no novelty for a critic, however good, to be myopic about faults in his work outside criticism. But to remember Allen's parodies of Bergman and others and then to hear the dialogue in *Interiors* is to be amazed that it could have come from the same writer. Just one example: a daughter says to her mother, "There's a perverseness and willfulness of attitude in many of your actions." (This, by the way, to a woman who has lately attempted suicide. She goes straight from this encounter to drown herself. Possibly to avoid hearing more of such dialogue?)

Or, if we remember Allen's parody of the Eisenstein Odessa-steps sequence in *Bananas* and then watch here his jejune imitation of the traveling shot down the beach in *Persona;* or of the Bibi Andersson close-up on the beach in that film; or of the prototypical Antonioni shot in which a couple are seated together not facing each other, these moments make us suspect, make us *want* to suspect, that they are parodic because they are so blatant.

A synopsis increases that sheer hope for parody. Three sisters (Yes. Even Bergman failed when he chose that Chekhovian number in *Cries and Whispers*) are the children of separated parents. Diane Keaton is a "successful" poet, married to a novelist, Richard Jordan. She thinks he's good, but he's so disgusted with his poor reception that he turns to criticism to vent his frustrations. Mary Beth Hurt is vocationally unsettled—an editor and copywriter among other things. She lives with a political scientist, Sam Waterston. The third sister, Kristin Griffith, is a film actress. Their mother, Geraldine Page, is an interior decorator, thus not very lightly underlining the title. Their father, E.G. Marshall, is a wealthy lawyer, who leaves Page. When reconciliation seems dim, she attempts suicide. Undeterred, Marshall divorces her and marries a widow, Maureen Stapleton. On the wedding night in the family beach house, Page arrives and drowns herself outside.

Now, as daintily selected as that group of characters is, they are not arbitrarily distanced from us. Artists *are* different from most other people, but as characters in fictional works, they can be epitomic. *Persona* and *L'Avventura* and *La Notte* are only three instances. And even though his schema is rather heavily crayoned, Allen has tried to give us a range of sensibilities coping with contemporary experience: the realized

Films Worth Seeing

Cat and Mouse. More sex than suspense in this pleasant (!) French murder mystery.

Girlfriends. Independent filmmaker Claudia Weill has made an independent film. It walks right up to the platitudes about young women today and walks right through them to affecting truth.

Go Tell the Spartans. Vietnam very early—1964. Despite war-movie trappings, some grip on the complexities and horrible ironies.

Heaven Can Wait. Remember *Here Comes Mr. Jordan*? Here he comes again, with adequate sentimental charm.

SK

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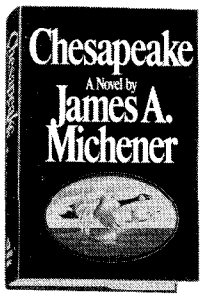

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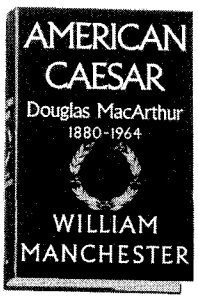

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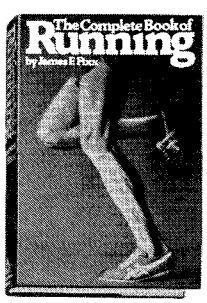

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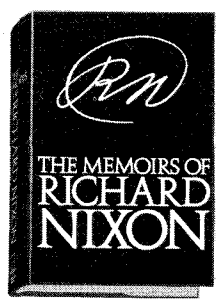

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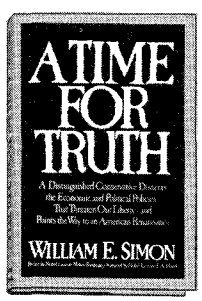

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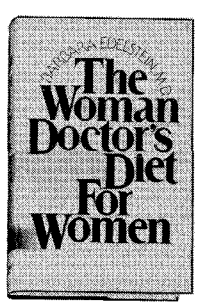

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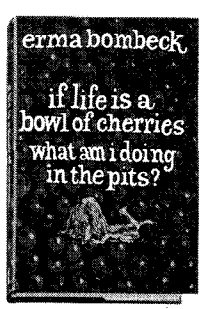

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artist (Keaton), the unrealized one (Jordan), the yearner after talent (Hurt), the chintzy tiny talent (Page), all the way to the utter extrovert (Stapleton). But it remains a schema only, a mere diagram, because of the film's spuriousness; and that spuriousness begins at the beginning, before the beginning.

Visually: the credits themselves, stark and silent, warn us that Allen hasn't done much delving. The very credits imitate Bergman. The opening images are only remembrances of images past. The lighting seems derived from Sven Nykvist. The silences, the intercutting of lone people in different rooms, the intercutting with them of empty rooms and of objects, are an album of Rohmer and Chabrol and Bresson and Ozu. Before *Interiors* is two minutes old, we have strolled down two decades of good films. It doesn't matter that the result has a smooth finish, that the cinematography of Gordon Willis and the editing of Ralph Rosenblum are polished: the result is wax fruit.

Verbally: from the start, the language has a "Sunday best" sound. As the sample above shows, a gifted writer evidently felt that he would prove his profundity by deadening his ear.

Dramatically: almost nothing happens. The people in this story "have" their problems as, it's said, the ladies of Boston "have" their hats. But it's another sign of superficiality to believe that, if characters have problems, they don't need dynamics: they can just loll around on their problems and the result will be a glimpse of the void at the heart of the universe. The one significant movement in the film is Jordan's change from novelist to critic, but that change is too light in the film's balance to matter much. All the other seeming motions are predictable and do no more than crystallize what we already know. We know that Jordan is going to try for his pretty sister-in-law. We know that Marshall will never come back to Page; so we know she's dead long before she kills herself. Hurt flits from job to job, but that's her stasis—to flit. The fundamental failure, under all the trappings of gravity, is that nothing moves; so nothing can move us, not even the mother's death, which, by the time it comes, is only the completion of an author's patent design.

Many have celebrated Allen's move up to seriousness. I deplore it. He was much more truly serious in *Annie Hall*, where he was getting cinematic control of his personal brand of comic dissection. Much has been made of the fact that he has moved from a Jewish view of the world to a gentile one. I deplore this, too, because I sense the Arthur Miller syndrome: if you are a Jew and want to write on large tragic matters, you must use gentile characters in order to get universality. Allen's characters are not, like those in *Death of a Salesman*, feebly disguised Jews; but they are abstracts, conjectures, with nothing of the reality that, for instance, the gentile Annie Hall had when avowedly seen through Jewish eyes.

All the actors are acceptable, and I ought to note that Page works with much less affectation than usual and Stapleton with many fewer clichés.

For me, there was just one moment when the film's rhetorical seriousness was breached by imagination. The sequence of Page's first suicide attempt begins with the camera on her hands as she fixes wide black tape on the cracks around windows and doors before turning on the gas. This goes on for a while until, the camera always on her hands, halfway down the side of a door she runs out of tape. The camera remains on the door. Her hands disappear. In a moment they reappear, and the job continues with white tape. That moment of bitterly comic practicality has the only originality and sting in the film.

John Canaday on photography

Polluted Birthright: II

Before we get to the dirge part, let me say that the current photography exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, "Mirrors and Windows," is bound to be good given its subject, which is American photography since 1960. The show was assembled by John Szarkowski, head of the museum's Department of Photography, and he of all people knows what has been happening, since he has been the major single force in determining, by validation or rejection, the directions taken by American photography in recent years. "Directions?" Direction, I should say. No plural. "Mirrors and Windows" is a metaphorical title for photography's supposedly bi-directional course—the mirror being the photographer's reflection of himself in a personal, romantic response to the world, the window being the world as seen objectively, factually—but I could find very few windows in this show. Virtually none. It is only by comparison with the most extreme personalism that the least subjective photographs in this exhibition approach objectivity; in all of them the photographer comes first, his subject second, which in my unpopular opinion reduces photography to a second-rate art at the sacrifice of the only function unique to it among pictorial media—the capture and preservation of a totally objective record of the photographer's times that no other pictorial form—for that matter, no written form—can achieve or even approach.

The seed of this heresy, I am certain, was planted within me by Matthew Brady, but it was only last month that I realized that it was fully developed and not to be argued away. An exhibition at Asia House of photographs of Imperial China dating back to 1851, photographs taken by journeyman photographers innocent of all esthetic theory or psychological goals, so impressed me with its vivification of a lost world that I reached the conclusion (in this column) that we made a mistake when we admitted photography to junior membership as a Fine Art about 80 years ago, that it is now hopelessly corrupted in its full-fledged status, and that a photograph is good to the degree that it fulfills its documentary potential and debased to the degree that this function is sacrificed to arbitrary esthetic or interpretive values. That's the dirge part.

The exhibition is a tremendous popular success. Everyone takes photographs, and although the average imagination doesn't go much beyond a feet-first view of a reclining figure, there is a feeling from photograph to photograph in "Mirrors and Windows" that you could go right out and do likewise. Only a few years ago the exhibition would have sent me hurrying home to dust off my Yashica 35 and out into the world to duplicate the tricky effects and romantic manipulations that dominate the show with its bizarre fragments of everyday reality that

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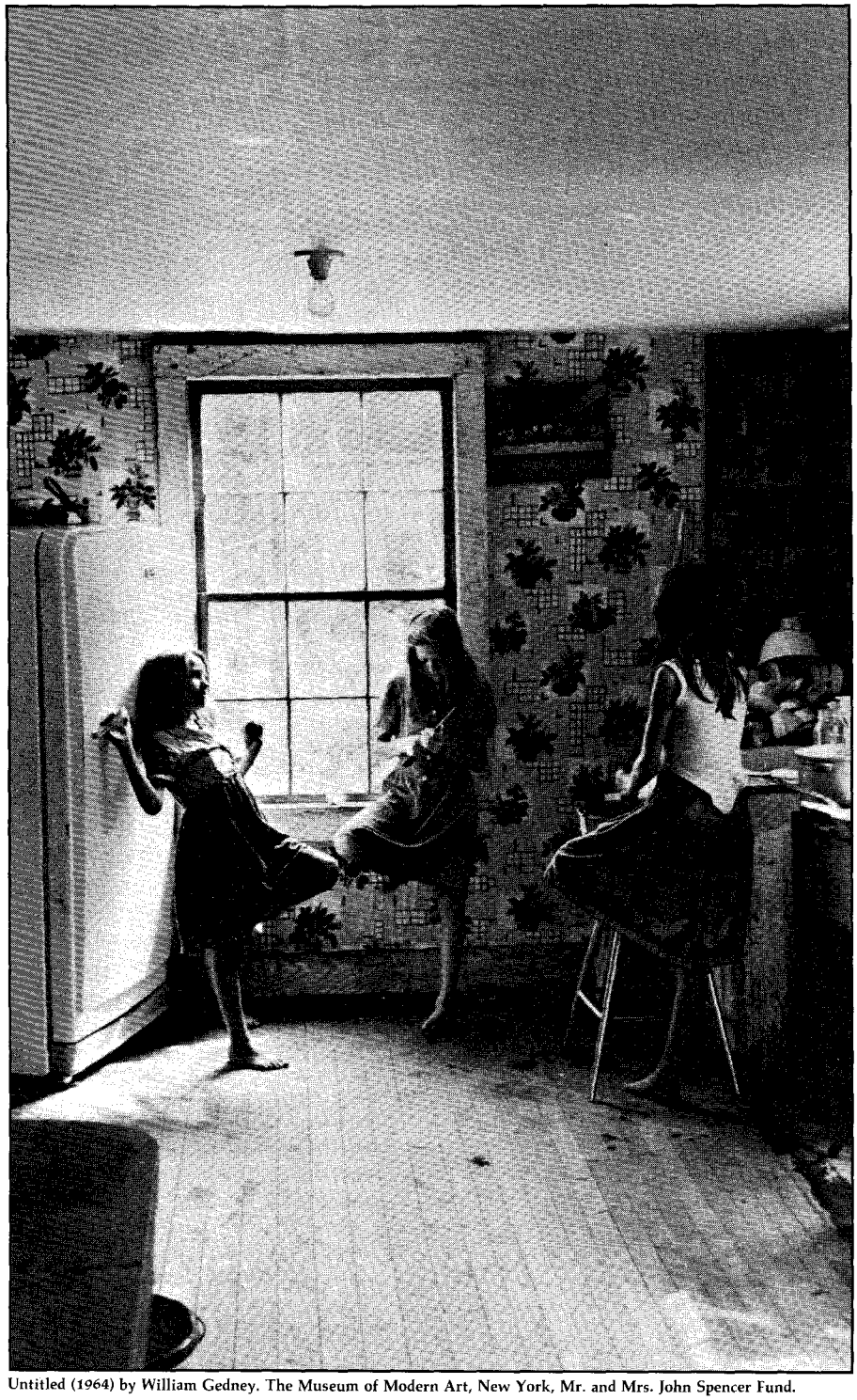

Untitled (1964) by William Gedney. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Mr. and Mrs. John Spencer Fund.

become surreal images out of context.

I am, of course, being hard on the show after having said that it is a good one granted its subject, and I am forgetting such exceptional photographs as Paul Caponigro's of prehistoric stone monuments in England, which capitalize on the camera's potential for recording quiet and timeless subjects in infinite detail rather than its jazzier talent for stopping a freakish moment in its tracks. Shouldering my way through the crowd I was just as interested in those moments as the next fellow, but that is just what they were—moments, quickly exhausted in anticipation of the next novelty. The photograph that offered the strongest rebuttal to my heresy was an untitled view of three young girls in a kitchen (illustrated here), evoking a poetic mood of great poignance. But I was reminded by the photographer's name, William Gedney, that I had seen a set of photographs he took in India that by virtue of being superb documents were equally moving but were not chosen for exhibition.

The photographs of the 1960s and '70s that will fascinate the next century when all but one in a thousand photographs like most of those in "Mirrors and Windows" have become interesting only as period pieces, are now filed away in, perhaps, Washington, or the photo-morgues of newspapers. The last two decades have been wonderful and terrible years; virtually everything else that happened in them is more important than any of the little moments immortalized in this show. In his introduction to the catalogue Mr. Szarkowski comments on the period preceding 1960 as a time when the now defunct news-picture magazines inspired photographers like Cartier-Bresson and Dorothea Lange to define the photographer's role in politically and socially significant terms. But more recently, he says, ". . . photography's failure to explain large public issues has become increasingly clear. No photographs from the Vietnam War . . . begin to serve either as explication or symbol for that enormity. For most Americans the meaning of the Vietnam War was not political, or military, or even ethical, but psychological. It brought to us a sudden, unambiguous knowledge of moral frailty and failure. The photographs that best memorialize the shock of that new knowledge were perhaps made halfway around the world, by Diane Arbus."

This impresses me as the most beautiful bit of compensatory rationalization that I have come across in many a day. Diane Arbus's images of moral frailty and worse—viciousness, stupidity, and corruption—are horrifying. She was a great photographer and in a class by herself, but she could have found images as horrifying among her fellow countrymen during World War II, a war we believed in, or similar images just about any time. No matter how specifically related to the 1960s and '70s her images may be in their details (the hair rollers worn by a woman in a scary portrait), her theme is not local and timely but universal and timeless, since moral frailty is not peculiar to any one civilization. I daresay that if she could have sailed on the Mayflower equipped with her camera, Diane Arbus would have landed on Plymouth Rock with a magnificent set of ghastly documents on human nature under stress, and none on its capacity to survive adversity.

(It has been brought to my attention that another exhibition of photographs of Imperial China, overlapping the one I saw at Asia House, was held at the Philadelphia Museum of Art this year accompanied by a publication, *The Face of China*, from Aperture, an excellent substitute for the exhibition itself.)

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Late Summer—Early Fall Book Listings

Notice to our Readers: Because of the New York newspaper strike, a number of books being published now may be lost to public view. Only so many books can be reviewed by us, or anyone else, and the loss of other media at this juncture will be harmful to those books which just now would be exposed to the light of day. In that spirit, we have requested a number of publishers to advise us in their own words of current books that they think deserve special notice. The appraisal and description are those of the book publishers. This is our second such listing. We will continue to publish these listings from time to time. **The Editors.**

APERTURE.

Minor White: Rites and Passages. A biographical essay by James Baker Hall. $25

A new book in response to the great demand for his photographs and a greater knowledge of his life and work. Published as a posthumous testament to Minor White—photographer, poet, educator, editor.

BASIC BOOKS

Cocaine
A Drug and Its Social Evolution
by Lester Grinspoon & James B. Bakalar $4.95

Here is the definitive book on all aspects of cocaine, increasingly the drug of choice among both dabblers and serious drug users. "The book contains perhaps the most complete assemblage of cocaine information yet . . . one of the most penetrating and stimulating studies of illicit drugs in our culture that I have come across."—*The New York Times Book Review.*

Gates of Eden
American Culture in the Sixties
by Morris Dickstein $4.95

"Dickstein's study effectively carries us back to those times when we really believed that protest might stop a horrific war. Dickstein's work is the best book on that exhilarating, depressing decade."—*The Boston Globe.* "It is a vivacious, highly original work . . . a book nobody will entirely agree with but only a dunce will be able to resist."—*Newsweek.*

BEACON PRESS

First Generation: In the Words of Twentieth-Century
American Immigrants
by June Namias $12.95

Multi-ethnic oral histories. "First rate . . . cuts through the stereotypes not only about newcomers but also about America. Scholarly, vivid, this has . . . drama and dreams, bitter realities and latter-day certainties . . ." *Boston Globe*

The Amendment that Refused to Die
by Howard N. Meyers $5.95 (paperback)

A three-part chronicle, nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, of the 14th Amendment—the freedom amendment. "Meyer has made a great contribution to our understanding of history."—Bella Abzug.

DA CAPO PRESS

From Ibsen's Workshop: Notes, Scenarios and Drafts of the Modern Plays
by Henrik Ibsen $7.95
translated by A. G. Chater

From Ibsen's Workshop is a look behind the completed facade of some of Ibsen's finest plays. It affords much insight into his ways of working, his tension between form and feeling."—Arthur Miller.

DIAL PRESS

Wings
by Robert J. Serling $9.95

A novel by the author of *The President's Plane Is Missing.* The exciting story of fifty years of American aviation as told through the life of one of its pioneers. Selected by three book clubs.

HARPER & ROW

Six of One
by Rita Mae Brown $9.95

This is the author's first book since her very successful *Rubyfruit Jungle* and is a comic and deeply moving novel that explores the relationships between and among women, particularly the love-hate that exists between two sisters.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Fairy Tales and After
From Snow White to E. B. White
by Roger Sale $11.00

A very personal rediscovery of some of the great works of children's literature, books that have been read and loved but seldom given the benefit of serious literary assessment.

The Poems of John Keats
edited by Jack Stillinger $25.00

The definitive Keats—an authoritative edition embodying the readings the poet himself most probably intended, prepared by the leading scholar in Keats textual studies.

HOLT, RINEHART & WINSTON

The Insect Colony
by Charles R. Larson $7.95

A perverse, erotic novel of sexual obsession, deceit, and self-discovery on the part of three Americans—a woman, her husband, and her lover—caught in the war in Biafra.

Silence at Salerno
by Francis Steegmuller $7.95

The author of *Flaubert and Madame Bovary* has written a novel, set in Italy, of an American author who unwittingly plunges into a scandalous international comedy of intrigue involving smugglers, nuns, a gay TV star, and the glamorous wife of a famous billionaire.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS

Private Lives of Public Servants
by Kenneth Lasson $10.95

Takes the reader through a day in the lives of six public servants. Lasson concludes that although in the bureaucracy "there are innumerable plodders, many others are genuinely diligent and efficient, some even heroic. . . ."

On the Take:
From Petty Crooks to Presidents
by William J. Chambliss $9.95

An exposé of crime and politics in America, Chambliss portrays the subterranean world surrounding billion-dollar industry built on gambling, drugs, fraud, and other crimes in Seattle, Washington; his findings have national implications.

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Grass-Roots Socialism:
Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895-1943
by James R. Green $24.95

Grass-Roots Socialism answers two of the most intriguing questions in the history of American radicalism: why was the Socialist party stronger in Oklahoma than in any other state, and how was the party able to build powerful organizations in nearby rural areas? Examined in this broadly based study are popular leaders like Oklahoma's Oscar Ameringer ("the Mark Twain of American Socialism"), "Red Tom" Sickey of Texas, and Kate Richards O'Hare, who was second only to Eugene Debs as a Socialist orator.

METHUEN

Only When I Laugh
by Erica Abeel $9.95

An insightful chronicle of one woman's discovery after her divorce. Although it caused pain, anger and sorrow, she still likes men and still feels she can fall in love.

The Attack on Corporate America
by The Law and Economics Center
edited by Bruce Johnson $14.95

There is a massive popular misunderstanding of the role of big business; Corporate America has become the whipping boy for politicians who are looking for an easy issue with which to mislead the public. The book is a collection of essays by leading scholars—which defends almost every criticism made against big business.

NY GRAPHIC SOCIETY

Great Photographic Essays From "Life"
by Maitland Edey $24.95

Twenty-two eloquent photographic stories, reproduced in the large format of previous *Life* books. Superb work by Berenice Abbott, Ansel Adams, Margaret Bourke-White, and many others. 438 Black & White illustrations.

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OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

A Critical History of British Cinema
by Roy Armes $17.50

A comprehensive survey covering 80 years of British film making—its successes and failures, its love-hate relationship with Hollywood and the work of its best directors, Hitchcock, Korda, Losey, Lean, and many more. 100 black and white photographs.

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Books Considered

Robert Kennedy and His Times by Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.

(Houghton Mifflin; $19.95)

Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. is a significant writer who ought to engage our interest. He will certainly engage the attention of future historians: if only for a page, it will be a page to return to. Not a heavyweight, to be sure. Not a lightweight, as some too easily dismiss him. (It grated on the nerves when Joseph Alsop once called him "Little Arthur": the meanness of conversation allowed to reach the page.) Not even a middleweight—that would be the most dismissive of all. Schlesinger has made himself count in the middle years of our century in a way that has no parallel in any other career. Balance him in one's hand against other publicists, and it will tip in his favor.

He is perhaps the most representative figure of mid-twentieth-century liberalism, so one has sometimes been tempted to regard him as no more than a weather vane. This volume recounts yet another stage in his pilgrim's progress, and many readers will be forced to ask themselves how far they have taken the same path. Yet there is more to him than that. He is not just representative. His viewpoint is individual. He stands at his own angle to the world, not because of any opinion or ideology, but because he can never quite suffocate the historian in him. The importance of this in him, and now in this book, is that American liberalism desperately needs to know where it has been. Its weakness today is that its own past does not speak to it.

The son of a man who, although not a great historian, was certainly a great teacher of history, Schlesinger has written only one book which can be regarded as a work of scholarly pretensions. It was his first: his biography of Orestes Brownson. No succeeding life of that strange man, who moved in, around, and through so many of the religious movements and intellectual fads of his time, captures so surely his fascination for us.

Brownson was a man in a landscape—that of early 19th-century New England, when transcendentalism was very much abroad, and Emerson very much at home—a time of intellectual and spiritual ferment. The progress of the Unitarian minister to Roman Catholicism is shocking in a way, yet Brownson never seems out of place in his own land. He stayed in his landscape, and it is the lack of a landscape that one senses in the liberal today. *Robert Kennedy and His Times* does not uncover that landscape, even though the liberal in this century might have been thought to have created one, but it does something almost as valuable: it bleakly depicts the contemporary liberal as a stateless person. Brownson was a popularizer, and he poses the question put by all popularizers. Charlatan or genius? Original or fraud? Popularization is an essential part of the culture of a democracy. To popularize without vulgarizing is a work that someone must do if democracy is to survive. Schlesinger's father was a great popularizer, and the biography of Brownson is the work of the father's son. If Schlesinger now rewrote the life, 30 years later, it would be doubly interesting. Himself a popularizer, he knows the track. Why did he choose Brownson as a subject? Had he found in him an advertisement of himself?

But then Schlesinger gave up history. *The Age of Jackson*, you may ask, was that not history? It is a very much better book than some revisionist historians in recent years have allowed. It stands up well to what Jacques Barzun dubs "quanto-history," the feeding of statistics into computers, imagining that history is what is then spewed forth. Schlesinger's is an orthodox New Deal account of Jackson and Jacksonianism. This is its value. He put the spunk of the 1930s into the 1830s and brought them nearer. *The Age of Jackson* survives because it came before history was robbed of its urgent voices, the voices that we reimagine and make speak to us; before we ceased to be historical beings in our own time, and so able to stand with the historical beings of the past.

Yet the change in Schlesinger was already there. "The Age" of Jackson. With that title he embarked on his career, not as the historian, but as the biographer of the Democratic Party. There followed the three volumes of the still incomplete *Age of Roosevelt*, and now we have this huge volume on Robert Kennedy and his times. If I were a Republican, I would feel a little piqued. Schlesinger appropriates whole decades of American history under the banner of his Democratic heroes. He not only distorts American history in this way, he distorts the history of the Democratic Party. There are many who would say that the 1960s were not Robert Kennedy's "times," but very much Lyndon Johnson's, for better or for worse, and that what Johnson achieved in his "times" is very much more deserving of a 900-page biography, with 100 pages of references, than what all the Kennedys have done.

But to make something substantial out of Robert Kennedy's short terms as attorney general and senator and presidential candidate, Schlesinger must claim that he "embodies the consciousness of an epoch." This is not history. It is not even biography. It is pamphleteering. It is impressionism. Robert Kennedy should be given to us as a man who acted in certain ways in a given time and place; he should not be given to us as one of Emerson's "representative men" or indeed as one of Carlyle's heroes. We do not read Carlyle's or Emerson's essays thinking that we are reading biography, but it is precisely this delusion that Schlesinger's method fosters in his readers.

The truth is that Schlesinger is writing about *his* "times." He is emerging from the body of his work as the most interesting of his characters. *The Age of Jackson* was followed by *The Vital Center*, which should be coupled with his later collection of essays, *The Politics of Hope*. These are key works of the 1950s, or rather of the anti-1950s. Here is Liberalism on the defensive, placed there by none other than Dwight D. Eisenhower. Whether he is writing about the need for heroes—an essay which presaged the coronation of John F. Kennedy—or about the influence of Reinhold Niebuhr—and his contemptuous dismissal of Jimmy Carter's appeal to Niebuhr was justified—Schlesinger is in these volumes the born pamphleteer. (In this he was again his father's son.) His prose sits up and barks. Barks but, alas, does not bite. The pamphleteer holds back his savagery.

Presumably the 1950s must be counted as Eisenhower's "times"—he held office, after all, during most of them—and if they were, he presumably "embodied the consciousness of an epoch"—and embodied it for liberals as well as for others. If the times were tame, did not liberals also become tame?

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Robert F. Kennedy at the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, June 5, 1968

United Press International

"The vital center" is a center made unobjectionable even to generals. Schlesinger makes a sweeping bow in it, for example, to the good citizenship of big business. Because he did not dismantle the New Deal, Eisenhower was stealing the center, at the very time when liberals were moving to occupy it. That the Republicans then threw away the advantage Eisenhower had given them is not the point: it was the liberals who not only had their fangs drawn but lay back in the dentist's chair and pleaded for the operation.

For if the 1950s were Eisenhower's "times"—this is the danger of attaching such labels—surely they were no less Adlai Stevenson's "times." Stevenson was the reverse side of Eisenhower, not his opponent but his foil. (That was exactly his role in both the 1952 and 1956 elections.) Nothing is more important in Schlesinger's new book than his reassessment of Stevenson. He is cold, starkly cold, about Stevenson. He criticizes Stevenson's speechifying, his lack of concern for immediate events and people, his dilatoriness and perfunctoriness, fundamentally his lack of seriousness. There is no more moving sentence in the entire work than his bald statement that his wife, Marian, stuck with Stevenson in 1960, while he himself went with Kennedy and in fact was already living the fable of Camelot. There was something of personal catastrophe in the moment. I have been told that both of them wept as Stevenson went down, she in her seat at the convention and he in the aisle, and it is painful to think of the difference in the tears. But Schlesinger has one more harsh fact to tell us. Robert Kennedy worked for Stevenson in 1956. Then—"On election day Kennedy quietly marked his ballot for Eisenhower." What a tale of the "times" is there. No single incident records more vividly the fact that in the 1950s the liberals left their landscape, that the twin influences of Eisenhower and Stevenson had made them divest themselves of their past. They did not know where they were. It was after all Schlesinger's ADA which wanted Eisenhower as a Democratic candidate in 1948.

And so we come to *A Thousand Days*. Unexpectedly this withstands a rereading, even though this new work is really a page-by-page revision of it. What does one say of a wreath that was already faded when it was placed on the brow of the dead hero? What does one say of a posy of forget-me-nots drooping on a grave that was too early? One can say this. It is a much more worthwhile book than Theodore Sorensen's born-dead volume. Schlesinger is in his book, and one finds that he matters; Sorensen is in his book, and he does not matter at all.

What a gift of narrative there is in Schlesinger, and it is a gift that counts because it speaks of a sense of sequence in events. Of *sequence*, not of *consequence*. Not of *post hoc propter hoc*—this happened because of that—but of *post hoc tum hoc*—this happened after that. This sense of narrative—finding a thread through the passage of events but not imposing a pattern on them—is the true genius of the historian. Again and again it is exhibited in *A Thousand Days*, but again and again the need to prove that all things happened because of Kennedy stifles it. What a lost historian there is in Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., what a lost

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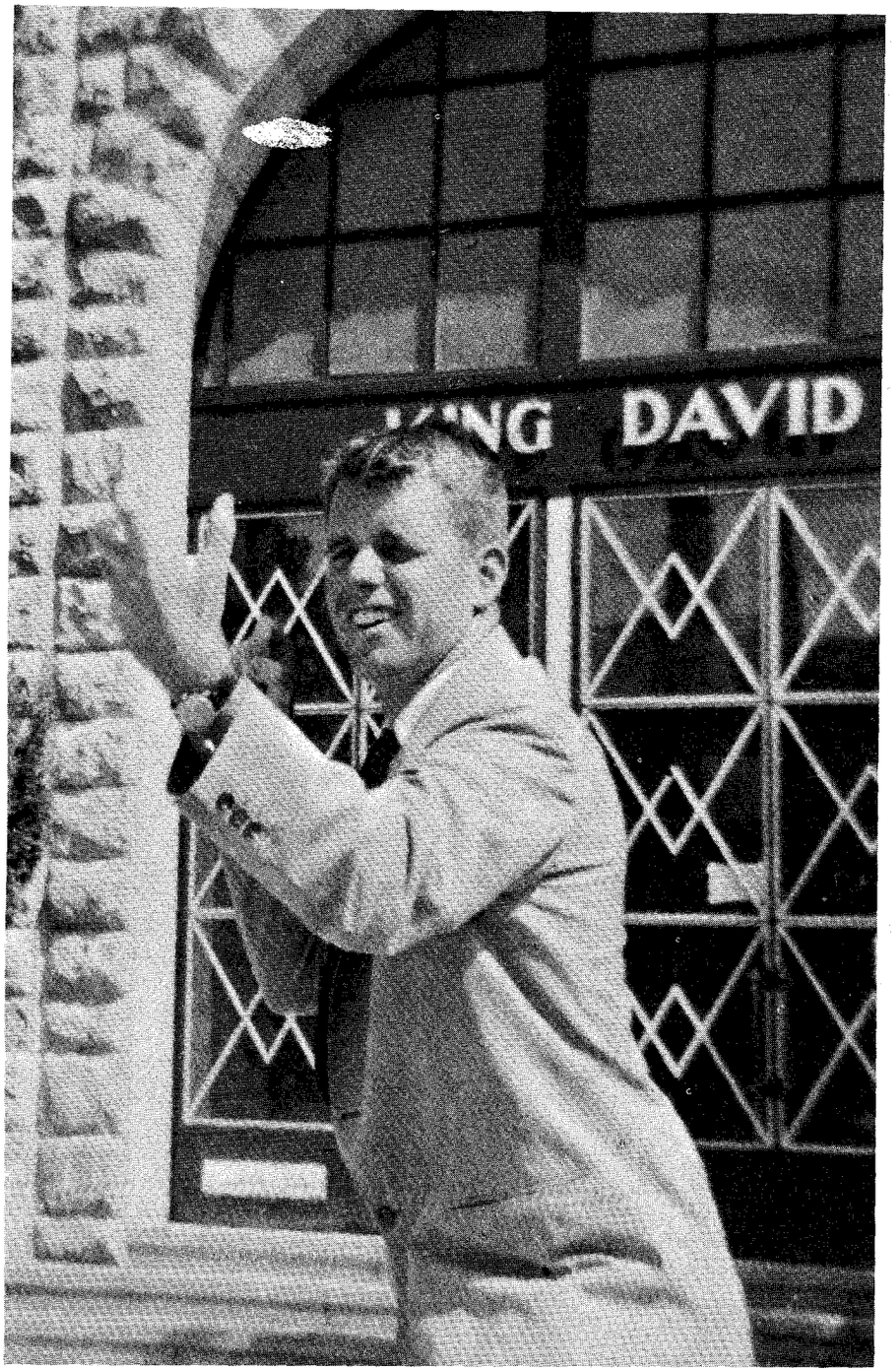

Robert F. Kennedy at the King David Hotel, Jerusalem, 1948 — John F. Kennedy Library

and wayward son of the father. Yet as a work of *pietas*, which ennobles its subject, it is worth having. For it tells of the liberal's true wish to govern, at a time when government is weak.

In *Robert Kennedy and His Times*, Schlesinger's gift for narrative, the historian's bent in him, is in open war with the pamphleteer's advocacy. One has to wonder, somewhere about page 200, and then page 400, and then page 600, and at last at page 916, why the book carries one along. It is overloaded with detail, with letters whose contribution is obscure, with asides that were better left unsaid, with supporting quotations from friends and colleagues. These are mere testimonials; they are not history. Even as testimonials, their value is dubious. Schlesinger has succumbed to the temptations of oral history. He is shy of his new method. His defense of oral history in his foreword is argued from a consciousness of its weakness. When one reads that Burke Marshall or even Robert Kennedy himself recalled some event "later," often years later, one is being given nothing more than the raw material of memory from which the historian must extract. Schlesinger knows perfectly well that he should have listened and then sifted. Oral history is only, for all its fancy name, a refusal to do the hard work of sifting. When we are given the personal words of various actors, that is all we are given, and we have either to take or reject their word that something happened as they say. To be a true work of history, as Schlesinger has obviously tried to make this, one needs his own historian's word for it. This is what we have historians for: to take their word that this was so. Since they are "making up" the history, it is only they who can vouch for it. The historian in this volume does not win, but at least he is still alive!

We are carried along, because we grow skilled at shedding the advocacy, and find the strength of true narrative—this happened after that. Amidst all the crowding of events, Robert Kennedy here seems, at least often enough to make him credible, to be out of control. There is a maturity in this book which one has missed in Schlesinger's work for a long time, and which one has missed in most of the Kennedy literature. The son is fighting his way back to the father. It is not a personal honesty that makes this book in the end convincing—by its own lights—but the honesty of a profession struggling to reassert itself in him, failing but trying. One has the feeling in this book that liberalism may yet find its way back through its own history, in order to rediscover its landscape, and that Schlesinger may be equipped to begin the task, because history and biography as testimonial are here, often enough, replaced by history and biography as accident and confusion. The eight well-organized chapters on Kennedy as attorney general do not try to organize the events themselves into an order which events never have; and neither do they try to give much order to Kennedy's responses to them. Robert Kennedy here flounders through the truck of uninvited occasions. Names like Meredith and Evers keep falling on his desk; and where is the liberalism in his response? It is not in any idealism, but in the need and drive to govern. Schlesinger may usually (but by no means always) give Kennedy the benefit of the doubt, but room for legitimate doubt is held open, at least while the historian stays uppermost.

If we as readers get used to shedding the advocacy, it must also be said that Schlesinger himself sheds it more than one expected. Even he seems to weary of adulation. It is not only interesting but important to notice how the arch and awkward vocabulary of tribute falls away after the opening chapters. It recurs here and there, and of course at the end. (But I rather like grand endings. I like the moment when a composer, like

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Elgar in his First Symphony, pulls out every chord, gathers every instrument together, and lets them all loose.) Schlesinger is superb at such moments—which is again a part of the task of the historian, to make the men of the past stand up—but in the end he does not rely on it. When he has a story to tell—the actual story of where Robert Kennedy was and what he did—he reaches less for the adjectives. And then what a story he makes of the man.

The adjectives are there, alas, how they are there! With them one is back on the New Frontier: "throwaway phrases and laconic jokes" . . . the "deflationary, self-mocking, sometimes grim wit" . . . "those impulses of irony, bravado, gentleness and vulnerability" . . . his "laconic humor" (p. 119) and, lest we forget, his "laconic irony" (p. 623) . . . "courage, spirit, and irrepressible wit" (this of Pierre Salinger, of all deadbeats) . . . "strong veins of sardonic humor" (change the word, but keep the rhyme) . . . "bony harshness and those ice-blue eyes." But above all there is still the giveaway word of the New Frontier: the highest word of praise is to be "tough." I began keeping a record of how often this word occurs—pp. xiii, 6, 61, 66, 67, 68, 97, 107, 153, 190, 213, 223, 242 . . . — but what is interesting is that, although it recurs after the rat-a-tat at the beginning, his use of it dwindles. With a real story to tell, and with an historian's eye for it, the adjectives are dispensable. Yet it was out of the tough, laconic, sardonic, ironic, grim, ice-blue image that the legend was born. And out of the legend came the recklessness.

The bravado of the Kennedys, not least of Robert Kennedy as he is portrayed here, does not amuse. It sickens. "Robert Kennedy appalled his friend by insisting on plunging into the treacherous surf of Copacabana Beach in the pitch dark of midnight"; after breaking his leg in a game of football, he "characteristically told no one and kept on trying to play until he collapsed on the field"; a "bloody brawl" with some Georgetown University students; a man who like Hoffa, if he jumped out of a sixth floor window one day, and survived, would jump out of the eighth floor window the next. . . . So the tales go. But if one lowers one's head for a moment, and counts all the personal tragedies which the Kennedys have suffered, it is hard not to count bravado as among their causes. If one turns to the public actions of the brothers, bravado again seems too persistent and disturbing an element. Show them Niagara, they do not see the still water downstream, where they might picnic.

Schlesinger again and again tries to meet the image of Robert Kennedy as a "ruthless" man and politician, and his efforts are not wholly unconvincing, but in the end he does not meet what many most feared in Robert Kennedy: his ruthlessness with himself. When I first met Robert Kennedy at his home in 1965, I remarked to the American friends who introduced me: "Those eyes. They seem already to say, *'Et tu, Brute.'* " Three years later he was assassinated. But I do not think that it was either his brother's assassination, or any premonition of his own, that gave the eyes that remorseless gaze. There was in the remorselessness a submission to fate, coupled with a belief, which was terrible, that no more than gestures could be made against destiny. It was to this power of gesture that the Kennedys reached too easily, making even those who would be with them quail at where it might lead.

For still in this book is the "existential" Kennedy of the legend, the "perceiver of the terror of life," whom we encountered in a milder and (ah!) laconic form in *A Thousand Days*, but which was exalted into the sovereign image of Robert Kennedy in 1968, and carried before him by journalists like Richard Harwood and Jack Newfield. It is to this image that Schlesinger returns in the account of the last campaign, which are certainly the least satisfactory chapters in the book. Schlesinger has persuasively demonstrated earlier that Robert Kennedy was an extraordinary campaigner, that from 1956 on he "knew everything about a campaign," but this revealing truth about the politician is put aside to give us the "existential hero." The historian here backs down from his task, for it was this very Gracchus that people feared, and might have feared enough in 1968 to vote him down. In one of the allowances that he gives to the Kennedys, Schlesinger slips and slides through the fact that the West Virginia campaign against Humphrey in 1960 was one of the dirtiest in living memory, slips and slides through the buying of the votes, and the unforgivable calumny against Humphrey's World War II record. He simply does not answer Humphrey's own bitter but dignified complaint in *The Education of a Public Man:* that the Kennedys chose to massacre and did so. But at least we are here given the believable campaigner, the politician who said in 1960 to the New York Democrats: "Gentlemen, I

"wilderness is an emotion-laden word..."

wherever people have struggled against nature for food and shelter, wilderness may be respected as a power or as a worthy adversary, but it is rarely seen as beautiful or good..."

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don't give a damn if the state and county organizations survive after November, and I don't give a damn if *you* survive. I want to elect John F. Kennedy." But by the time we come to 1968, this politician who trampled where he had to trample, trampled on any and all in his way, is replaced by the messiah of the ghettos, the false messiah.

It is frightening and frightful how this book falls to pieces in the description of the 1968 campaign. Here was Robert Kennedy on trial for the first time as a national leader, and so here also is the historian in Schlesinger fully on trial. We get muck, a strong word, none other will do. He allows nothing to those—Johnson, McCarthy, Humphrey—who stood back a little from the fury of the time. Men who met the rhetoric of the street with the dictionary of politics. "Lyndon Johnson's response to the urban riots of 1967 had been to appoint a Commission on Civil Disorders." Was that really all of Johnson's response? "The poor [and the blacks] were not his people," he says of Eugene McCarthy, the yap of the journalism of 1968 made to do service yet again. Could it not be that McCarthy was unwilling to appropriate the poor and the blacks in a search for power? But as usual the telltale is in the style. In his chapters on the 1968 campaign, Schlesinger returns to what one can only call his climatic reading of history. The elements are brought on stage, as in his account of the inaugurations of both Roosevelt and John Kennedy. "It was a cold, windy evening. . . . The wind blew smoke and dust through the gleam of the spotlights." And against such a background stands Robert F. Kennedy like one of the weirds in *Macbeth*: "gaunt and distressed and full of anguish" as he quotes one journalist. But where was the real anguish? He insultingly says that Humphrey waited for a "non-demeaning moment" to announce; he can find not one real word of salute to the demeanor of Johnson's speech of abdication. We are given this fiction of a man alone who, like his brother, did so little for those to whom he promised so much.

One could go through this book, page by page, with *A Thousand Days* at one's elbow, and try to track down what Schlesinger is really claiming, both for Robert Kennedy and for his elder brother. He just comes to grips with the methods that Kennedy used in his pursuit of Hoffa; he does not come to grips with the fascination of Kennedy with what he called "technical equipment" for bugging and wiretapping. He just comes to grips with the Kennedy obsession with Cuba; he does not even try to come to grips with the Kennedy responsibility for the downfall of Ngo Dinh Diem, which was the crucial decision that Americanized the war in Vietnam. He presents us with abundant evidence on which to make up our own minds—the book is a storehouse of information—but in the end the historian loses. One closes the volume for the second time. How honorable is the effort. How difficult it must have been. But it is time Schlesinger ceased being a valet.

For what the historian shows here is that liberalism, with its willingness to govern, its readiness to subdue the state by putting it to work, dare not rely on strong or even good men who arrive from the great blue yonder. To release such a willingness to govern, with no check on it from elsewhere in the political body, is to court futility and disaster at the same time. The disaster wrought by the Kennedys is that they did so little but in such a way that we cannot forget them. They haunt us. One looks through one's long notes on *Robert Kennedy and His Times*. There is hardly a genuine politician mentioned in them all, with the exception of the notable series of bows to James O. Eastland. It is not that Schlesinger slights opponents like Lyndon Johnson, Humphrey and McCarthy, but that he will not even try to measure their size. The struggle between Kennedy and Johnson was not just a personal duel, as Schlesinger tries to make it, it was a collision between two deeply opposed views of what politics sets out to do. Johnson's to use power to govern; Kennedy's to use government for power. Whether all agree with that or not, surely we can agree that to write a biography of a junior politician of the 1960s without more than trifling with the personality of Lyndon Johnson is to obliterate the landscape in which Kennedy acted.

The historian in the end loses in this fascinating work, because Robert Kennedy is allowed no opponents worthy of him. He moves and acts in an unpeopled country, except for the reflections of the Kennedys in their own servants. The importance of this book is that Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. has shown how desolate is the land in which he himself has moved since the "times" of Eisenhower. He has shown us the wasteland. This is a picture of desolation—now he may be ready to plant in it again. If he does, we may have from him a very remarkable work of political intuition. (No one can deny the intuitive political feel of this man.) But let him not, oh! merciful god, write a life of Edward M. Kennedy.

Henry Fairlie

Marc Chagall: The Artist With Seven Fingers by Sidney Alexander

(G. P. Putnam's; $14.95)

Marc Chagall by Sidney Alexander begins with this lamentation: "The world in which Marc Chagall grew up is no more now than shards of memory. The log cabins of his Vitebsk served to stoke the ovens of Treblinka. Its fiddlers on the roof have flown to Paradise . . . via Hell." This is not only the fascinating story of one man, Chagall. It is the history of several social and artistic epochs beginning with 1887, the year of Chagall's birth in Czarist Russia, spanning World War I, the Russian Revolution, World War II and the Holocaust, the birth of Israel and reaching to the present time.

The book presents a full-length, three-dimensional portrait of Chagall, and gives an account of the many people intimately involved with him, and of the "movers and shakers" of those times who had some relevance to his life and work. It describes his childhood, youth and art student days in Vitebsk and later in St. Petersburg, under the guidance of Leon Bakst; it shows us the young artist in Paris, where he was nicknamed "Marc the Poet"; it details his return to Vitebsk to marry Bella and his stay in Russia until 1922, where he became involved in the frenetic art world of those revolutionary years. There is a moving

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description of Chagall teaching art to the homeless waifs in Boys Town, Malachovka (and how the teacher and the students loved one another) under the patronage of the tolerant, romantic, art-loving "Commissar of Enlightenment," Lunacharsky. Those were terrible years in Russia—no heat, no food, no paints, no canvas. These hardships finally forced Chagall to go to Paris, from which he was temporarily exiled during World War II when he stayed in the US. He is now back in France.

Unlike the cool and objective art historians in fashion today, Sidney Alexander is what I would call a "passionate" art historian. I once observed him lecturing on Giotto to a group of young men and women in Santa Croce, Florence: he mesmerized his listeners with his enthusiasm. His field has been Renaissance and pre-Renaissance art. He uses this knowledge in referring to Chagall's work. For instance: Discussing *Paris through a Window* where Chagall "humorously is juggling with the categories of inside and out," Alexander points out a similar device in Duccio's *Altar Piece* in Siena, adding that while "Duccio's odd perspective was ineptitude, Chagall's is a sophisticated playfulness." In his painting *The Soldier Drinks* there is, besides the main figure of the soldier, a miniature couple dancing in the foreground of the table: "The scale reduction is dramatic and entrancing and completely unexpected in a picture whose elements, no matter how strident, do not pre-figure this, and one reacts as one does to the miniature in the corner of Parmigianino's *Madonna of the Long Neck*. Again of *Paris through a Window*, which has in it elements of cubism, orphism, the influence of Russian icons, Alexander says: "but despite this 'modernity,'" Marc Chagall's vision was then and has remained "pre-industrial, indeed, pre-Renaissance. His parallels are to be found in artists like Sassetta or the tre-centisti."

Alexander's treatment of Chagall's paintings and graphics is perceptive and considered, although at times over-analytical. He approaches the work, particularly the early work, with deep appreciation. How poetically he describes the *Double Portrait with Wine Glass:* "With Marc seated on Bella's shoulders, drunk not only with wine but sex, covering one eye of his bride . . . toasting marriage as acrobats blessed by an angel—this is an entirely fresh invention, and surely one of Chagall's greatest works; full of pictorial brio and remarkably successful in composing a tottering vertical." (Doesn't this bring to mind another double portrait—that of the young Rembrandt with Saskia on his lap also toasting a marriage and, like Chagall, holding aloft a goblet of wine?)

It is hard to do justice in this review to such a detailed book of almost 500 pages. Since Sidney Alexander has never met Chagall, one must give him credit for his tireless research to create a living image of this complicated, controversial, talented personality. Although a main source of this biography is Chagall's *My Life*, Alexander relies heavily upon interviews with people who at one time or another were acquainted with Chagall, or who were, and still are, his friends; and others who knew him in his youth and then became estranged from him. And there were those like Boris Aronson and Lilik Schatz who accused him of snobbery, greed, stinginess, obsequiousness to wealth and influence. (It may be pointed out here that these were at one time among the host of "Chagallists," imitators of Chagall, lacking, of course, his genius, his "neshomeh," his soul. They proclaimed themselves "Jewish" artists and tried to submerge Chagall in their parochialism. Chagall resisted this; always, he insists, he is a universal artist. Rejected and repudiated, they expressed their hostility in these interviews.)

In contrast is the interview with Meyer Schapiro, who, among other favorable comments, said, "Chagall has a capacity for elation," and who applied to him Baudelaire's description of a poet "so full of his poetry that he walks crookedly." These words make one feel the man and his art.

Chagall's life with Bella, known to have inspired so many of his paintings and his autobiography, is fully dealt with in this book. Not so well known is Virginia Haggard McNeil's unpublished memoir of eight years of her life with Chagall after Bella's death. It is a candid, moving and sensitive record of a woman who "needed to be needed" (in Alexander's words). We get from her a picture of a man of many moods: gregarious, unsocial, generous, stingy, friendly, morose, always addicted to work. It is a delicate document by a woman who for eight years played the role of a "Hendrike Stoeffels" to Marc Chagall.

There is much more in this book—his unmarred friendship and correspondence with the Yiddish poet, Abraham Sutzkever; his association with the background figures—Soutine, Modigliani, Moise Kisling, the Russian poets—Mayakovsky, Bierliuk, Yesenin. The mention of Yesenin especially intrigues me. According to Alexander, Chagall loved Yesenin's poetry. I suddenly remembered Yesenin's poems. As Chagall nostalgically painted himself and his village, Yesenin sang, "I am the last poet of the village." He sang about the "orange cows" of Russia. The early narcissistic self-portraits of Chagall, blue-eyed and curly-headed, are not unlike Yesenin's poems about himself—"like sunflowers in the field bloom my eyes." He describes himself curly-headed, joyful and mischievous.

Another item discussed by Alexander relates to his 1973 trip to the Soviet Union. How flattered Chagall was, and with what emotion he signed the murals he had painted 50 years before for the old Jewish State Theatre! But he did not speak up against the anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, which created an outcry in the organized Jewish world. However, in his outpouring of letters to his friend, Abraham Sutzkever, as well

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as in the poet's own diary, Alexander finds Chagall a Jewish nationalist, the lover of Israel, the ever-faithful son of his people. And he finds this repeated by David Lazar, an Israeli writer from Poland, with whom Chagall visited the sites of the Holocaust. "Chagall wanted to see everything, to know everything. We cried together. . . . His soul is divided into three parts. He feels he owes a great deal to France. He is very proud of his Jewish heritage. And he has a deep sentiment for Russia—for its landscapes, its art, its literature."

In the final evaluation, Alexander restates what is now a general opinion, that Chagall's great work was done in the past and that for many years now he has been repeating himself. He is not the Michelangelo of the *Nicodemus* and the *Rondanini Pietà*, or the Beethoven of the last quartets. That is to say old Chagall has not revealed those astounding renewals of great creativity. As for Chagall the man—"dreamer and doer, pragmatist and poet, ironic sentimentalist, calculating somnambulist, Marc Chagall continues . . . amazingly vital for his years, still flying."

Since it is incumbent upon a reviewer to be at least a little critical, let me point out some minor faults: too many interviews giving similar responses—the author should have been more selective; tendency to exaggerate; inclination toward flowery language.

On the whole, a remarkable biography, which, I fear, Chagall may find too intimate.

Raphael Soyer

Raphael Soyer, a painter, is author of *Diary of an Artist* (New Republic Books).

Facts of Life
by Maureen Howard

(Little, Brown; $8.95)

Maureen Howard is a talented novelist who has never written anything so concentrated and properly disturbing as this memoir. It is a book that fascinatingly rearranges the facts about her native Bridgeport that appeared in her novel, *Bridgeport Bus*. Why so many novelists should need to write "memoirs" is a question that answered itself when I read *Facts of Life*. While the novel in any time, especially ours, has to learn new tricks like a circus dog, obviously that form still doesn't always serve a novelist who just wants to confront *herself*, to show the endless shapes her life presents when she tries to put it together.

A major reason why so many novelists turn to "non-fiction" is that they do narrative well in any disguise. My first impression of *Facts of Life* was of sheer novelistic skill, of so many stories, moods and time-shifts turning up in every chapter that it looked as if the author was stuck with a lot of effects that she couldn't unload in a novel. But it turned out to be a ruthlessly personal story told, like all good self-histories, to deliver the author from evil, to liberate her from some pressing burdens.

The fact that Maureen Howard doesn't seem much happier at the end of her brilliantly told story than she does at the beginning doesn't diminish her achievement. She is a dogged snipper of the human heart who, despite life with other breeds, retains a narrowly focused Catholic suspicion of enthusiasm, especially her own. Every "autobiography" (a genre that changes with each new example of it) is an attempted solution of a specific life problem. Since it is easier to write a book than to liberate oneself from all pain, sin and error, it doesn't surprise me—though Maureen Howard's bitterness sometimes does jar me—that she communicates her stirring hatred of pretense and false gentility better than she does any great personal liberation. The style is very, very bright; the other characters are wonderfully alive; the suffering and resentment out of which the book was written stick to it like a burr.

The story is of an extremely perceptive but family-tied Irish Catholic girl in Bridgeport who realizes bit by bit (as perhaps only women so much *have* to) that the life to which she is submissive is

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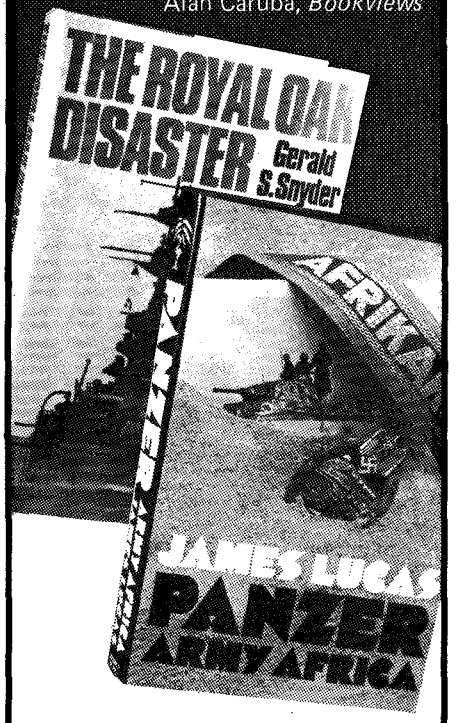

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full of lies, absurd ambitions, nonsense culture. (In *Bridgeport Bus* an old maid who is not old at all makes up little dramas to pep up the facts in *her life.*) The "facts of life" that become the book's characters and scenes were not presented to Maureen Howard growing up; the writer-to-be reluctantly dug out the "facts" and now puts them together. This is traditional, routine. All parents keep secrets from their children, and there are worse ways of growing up and away from one's parents than to become a writer able to put life on the page. What is also familiar by now is Irish American disenchantment with the old moral absolutes, the shock of divorce. The Irish have a lot of writers, a lot of alienation to write about.

Bridgeport being Bridgeport—"a vaudeville joke of a town, it had little and opted for less"—and Maureen Howard's father being the "detective of Fairfield County," the comedy of false appearances behind every lace curtain soon divulges itself. The mother was a lady, went to Smith, had a hearty successful father; Maureen's father (*his* father was "a mere attendant at the county jail") went to seminary, was well educated, loves his wife and children, but out of some long-standing grudge comes to dinner in his undershirt and has his timid wife cater to him as his mother and sisters did. His children, both intellectuals, "were an affront to the daily sacrifice of himself. . . . My father just threw his gifts away. The truth is that he loved roles, did a superb job of playing the seminarian, the cub reporter, the law student, the business man, but like many inventive actors he tired of long runs."

The mother, soft-spoken, refined—"alas, she was fey, fragmented"—pushed Maureen to Culture, elocution lessons, dancing lessons, the highly acceptable WASP college she herself had gone to. The most jarring disclosure—funny to the reader but not to a daughter who had been brought up to pinch, save, and contribute to the family—is that the mother's prosperous father had left them more money than Maureen's parents could admit. The mother's remarkable shame about money is brilliantly brought home to us in a scene that shows her *washing* ten and twenty dollar bills at the kitchen sink.

That same need to see life darkly, to bear resentments, plainly survives in Maureen Howard herself. But what else would make one undergo the pain of an "autobiography"? Admitting her grudgefulness, she finds herself "circling back to the problem of Joseph McCarthy. . . . My father wanted revenge, along with the Senator from Wisconsin, on a society that had treated the Irish like guttersnipes and cartoon drunks when he was a kid."

Maureen Howard also knows, having served as a dutiful faculty wife at several English departments east to west, how thin, deceitful, and venomous "culture" can be in the academy. She says of herself in the conformist 1950s, "My education and career were sham intentions, smart midcentury substitutes for the embroidery work and social graces of an earlier time."

Of her early married life at Williams College she says "it cannot be that all we talked about was our insecurity . . . I did anything to please . . . And there were evenings, I must force myself to be fair, when the Annex seemed free of the rotted stench of academic politics, our soiled bandages and bloody surgical pads, and friendship was an accomplishment that we all excelled at . . . I began to push the idea of being young and pretty before it was too late, toyed with the students, developed a devastating tongue. If I seem harsh it is because I see myself again as a fashionable young woman in a decorous red cocktail dress and a gamin haircut standing on the shabby porch of Williams Hall Annex ready to go out: all style and no content."

Beyond Bridgeport and the academy, and just like them, only worse, was the great self-promotional world of American publishing. There is a description of a book-and-author luncheon around the glassed-in swimming pool of a "distinguished motel," with 200 plus housewives as her audience drinking daiquiris and Bloody Marys at eleven in the morning and listening to dirty stories told by a Las Vegas show girl, that makes one see in the clearest and most painful tones the utter contrast between the honest soul of Maureen Howard and the world we all have to live in. "There was something pure in the utter filth of the experience." If she has a "devastating" tongue and an obstinate "grudge," her book ends on a vision of herself at 23, about to get married and with perfect faith in her coming happiness, that turns the reader over. A painfully strong, good book.

Alfred Kazin

Alfred Kazin's most recent book is *New York Jew* (Knopf).

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WILLIAM MORROW

Injustice: The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt by Barrington Moore Jr.

(M. E. Sharpe, distributed by Pantheon Books; $17.50)

While I was reading Barrington Moore's study of the "social bases of obedience and revolt," I saw a television interview that might serve as a gloss on this rich and marvelous book. An ABC reporter was talking to a Vietnam veteran with lung cancer which may have been caused by his exposure to a herbicide used by the army in Vietnam. Was he angry about that dire possibility? No, he

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answered, and in any case, at whom could he be angry? How did he feel, then? "Disappointed," he said, that this was happening to him. *Disappointed*, not outraged.

Moore's subject is "why people so often put up with being the victims of their societies and why at other times they become very angry and try with passion and forcefulness to do something about their situation." In a simplistic social psychology quite popular on the 1960s left, the very existence of pain and injustice was supposed automatically to give rise to militance. The facts do not, of course, corroborate that thesis, and Moore sadly concludes that "the notion that there is some indomitable spirit of revolt in all human beings is, I fear, sheer myth." Yet that spirit does erupt at times. What gives rise to it? What suppresses it?

Moore divides his response into three main sections. In the first, he looks for constants and variables that touch on obedience and revolt. This is the weakest part of the book, in considerable measure because the subject matter (nothing less than "human nature" itself) is so broad and imprecise. Yet even here fascinating material abounds. The second section is a painstaking, thoughtful study of the German working class from 1848 to the rise of the Nazis. A final section deals with the theoretical problems implicit in the factual accounts and analyses and includes some very perceptive comments on the problem of moral relativism. The whole is a fit sequel to Moore's magisterial *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*.

In his discussion of the constants and variables of obedience and revolt, Moore is at his best when he considers "the moral authority of suffering and injustice," that self-devaluation which leads people to believe they deserve the misery imposed upon them by oppressors. The Untouchable in India is one obvious case in point. He rationalizes his lot as the outcome of a pseudo-choice: he suffers because one of his ancestors failed to treat a high caste person with sufficient respect. There is, Moore argues, no evidence that the Untouchables have ever revolted against this pernicious myth. It is not simply that such a revolt would have failed (the defiant Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto had no illusions about victory) but that the Untouchables have, over centuries, accepted their fate—have even established caste differences within their own out-caste.

The compliant behavior in Nazi concentration camps is similar, although here monstrous force rather than religious fatalism provides the basic rationale. In the camps men and women responded to intolerable injustice by attacking those who broke the rules, by working with their tormentors, even by aping their uniforms. What is striking, Moore comments, "is the way solidarity among an oppressed group forms readily *against* an individual protestor or protector. . . . The reasons for this solidarity are clear enough: any single act of defiance runs the risk of retaliation that threatens the whole group. Thus the group's spontaneous efforts at defense can easily and almost unavoidably serve to perpetuate and even intensify its submission."

The second section deals with a less dramatic situation: the response of the German working class to the coercions of industrialism. The proletariat, Moore argues, never constituted anything like the majority of German society, and its growth relative to other sectors seemed to have stopped by the outset of World War I. Moreover, the Free Trade Unions of the pre-war period—which were associated with the Socialists—were concentrated in smaller firms with backward technology; they made few inroads into heavy industry, like iron, steel and chemicals, the supposed home of the quintessential proletariat.

Moore quotes Otto Hue, the editor of a socialist union paper on the coal miners: ". . . the mass of the workers lives with the viewpoint that this is the way it's got to be 'because that's the way it's always been.'" Hue's thesis is central to Moore's entire analysis. It is a sense of the inevitability—the "naturalness"—of injustice that persuades people to accept it quietly. Conversely, it is when routine social organization breaks down—when life is no longer what it was yesterday—that revolt becomes possible (but by no means inevitable: apathy and despair can take over and make people even more malleable). That breakdown often occurs when there is a sudden, unsettling leap in productive capacity; and if it is to have a progressive issue, Moore holds, some elements of the dominant classes must defect to the insurgent side. At such moments, the "outside agitators"—Jacobins, Bolsheviks, Chinese Communists, Fidelistas—can place themselves at the head of a people already in motion. Something like that

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revolutionary moment seemed to occur at the end of World War I in Germany. The social ingredients were there: military revolts, the emergence of a "Red Army" which captured cities in the Ruhr, the growth of political tendencies, like the Spartacists and the Independent Socialists, to the left of the official Socialists. Yet Ebert and the official Socialists held on in the face of what they believed to be the threats of dictatorship from both the extreme left and the extreme right. "The old order," Moore comments (and his insight echoes Antonio Gramsci) "was temporarily defeated and discredited. But it was not completely rotten . . . as it had become by 1917 in Russia." So Ebert made a de facto alliance with the moderate right, which stabilized the situation by creating "a liberal capitalist regime with very few liberals. Within a decade and a half that regime succumbed to Hitler."

Though most of this analysis is persuasive, there is a methodological criticism to be made which has important political implications. One of Moore's reference points is, as one might imagine, Marxism. But the Marx he posits is a bit of a straw man; Marx is more complex than he allows. To be sure he sometimes failed to face up to Moore's question: What turns the objective fact of exploitation into subjective revolt? Much as the early Freud thought that bringing the repressed to consciousness would effect a cure, so Marx talked as if the facts of life would automatically make workers revolutionary.

In other moods, he saw deeper. Even in his youth he understood that the "ruling ideas of an age are the ideas of its ruling class," i.e. that workers would internalize the values and ideology of their exploiters. And, in his maturity, Marx demonstrated at length in *Capital* how the system was designed, precisely, to make an unequal exchange between unequals seem equal. Under such conditions, workers could either become conformist or revolutionary. So it was that in the aftermath of Hitler's rise to power, the Austrian Max Adler did not think it at all paradoxical to write a Marxist analysis of how the German working class "dug its own grave instead of being the gravedigger of capitalism."

At times, Moore slights these complexities, which makes him think his evidence is grimmer—more conservative—than it is. And predictably, one reviewer has already claimed that *The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt* undercuts the Marxists and indeed the whole left. Moore himself, however, is an avowed left liberal who attacks moral relativism in the name of a rational ethic of reducing human suffering and who is alive to the "suppressed possibilities" of history, e.g. of a more progressive outcome to the social anger of the German workers at the end of World War I. Yet he is at times almost apologetic about the bad news he is bringing the left.

I don't think he should be. Those who want to change the world have no business romanticizing protest and revolt; as a fair number have demonstrated in recent years, it is too easy to turn to private gardens when the routine of oppression continues to grind on in its implacable way. Barrington Moore has written a brilliant account and interpretation of one of the greatest defeats the left ever suffered. His book is an extremely important contribution to the scholarly literature—and to the work of overcoming the "moral authority" of injustice.

Michael Harrington

Michael Harrington's most recent book is *The Vast Majority* (Simon & Schuster).

Final Entries: The Diaries of Joseph Goebbels edited and introduced by Hugh Trevor-Roper

(G.P. Putnam's; $14.95)

Perhaps the most important fact to bear in mind when reading this generally interesting, but rarely surprising book is that Joseph Goebbels fully intended it to be published. The Reichsminister for Propaganda remained true to his calling to the end. Enormously concerned about how future generations would view Hitler, himself and the New Order they fashioned, he seems to have intended his collected diaries to serve as the great literary legacy of the Nazi leadership. The material here originated in East Germany and has been authenticated beyond doubt by scholars in the West; it contains regular entries beginning in late February, 1945, and continuing with remarkable regularity through to April 9, when Goebbels, preparing for his final descent into the bunker was wondering "where all this will lead."

How are we to deal with Goebbels's perspective on the Götterdämmerung? In his excellent introduction Hugh Trevor-Roper explains that "to the end [Goebbels] could distinguish the objective truth from his own propaganda." This seems fair enough. Indeed, a transcript of Goebbels's remarks to his subordinates at a conference in the ministry in July, 1941, as preparations were being made for the propaganda onslaught that would accompany the invasion of the Soviet Union, reveals him in an unusually candid moment. Addressing the question of how his favorite victims should be dealt with he states point-blank: "Gentlemen, let's not fool ourselves. There is, of course, no unified world Jewry—the way we pre-

Joseph Goebbels United Press International

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sent it—which will cling together in life and death. No one will seriously believe that the Jews of the London City or the Jewish bankers in Wall Street will have the same interests as the Jews sitting in Moscow's Kremlin." Trevor-Roper, then, may well be correct in attributing the effectiveness of Nazi propaganda to Goebbels's personal ability to combine "calculated fanaticism with intellectual detachment."

But save for the dry, factual reports of the military situation which precede nearly every entry in this book, it is Goebbels the propagandist who is writing here. Only the fact that during the war years he neither amended nor edited the typed version of his handwritten entries has allowed for the inclusion of a limited amount of material of genuine historical interest. Undoubtedly subsequent events would have determined the final form the diaries took; it is, however, safe to assume that they would have remained basically as we have them here, simply because they do not differ significantly in substance from either his public pronouncements or from state policy.

Among the obsessive themes in this volume—Goebbels suffered from a chronic tendency to repeat himself—are his profound faith in the Führer, his outrage at the Allied "terror-bombing" of Germany, and his ever-growing admiration for the genius of Stalin. The mesmerizing personality of Hitler, that "shining example of steadfastness of spirit" and "iron will," lifted Goebbels's sagging morale again and again during the final desperate months. Their wholly unreal relationship—they read Carlyle's *Frederick the Great* for inspiration and celebrated Roosevelt's death as a signal from the heavens that the tide would be reversed—appears to confirm the analysis of Hitler's biographer Robert Waite (*Hitler The Psychopathic God*) that Hitler's power over his closest associates consisted in his ability to fulfill their psychological needs. Goebbels's only gripes with the Führer's behavior turn on the latter's refusal to break his silence and deliver an address to the nation (Goebbels was prepared to orchestrate it) and on Hitler's unwillingness to dismiss von Ribbentrop (Goebbels long dreamt of becoming foreign minister), or "that degenerate," Goering.

The hatred of Goering, so pervasive in these pages, stems largely from the inability of his Luftwaffe to stop Allied bombing. Goebbels believed that the bombing had demoralized Germany and accelerated surrender in certain spots. The raids had made the German people "nervous and hysterical" and "thoroughly despondent," in addition to creating the massive internal migration of refugees which undermined the Nazi war effort. These comments represent an interesting vindication of Allied strategy, insofar as the saturation bombing has been strongly criticized, both by historians and military men, on the grounds that it stiffened the German will to resist. Goebbels thought otherwise.

As for Ribbentrop, the scalding presentation of the pompous and bumbling Nazi foreign minister, a former wine merchant exalted by Hitler as "another Bismarck," grows out of Goebbels's belief in the possibility of a negotiated settlement. Not in the West, as "the gangster Churchill" appeared totally committed to destroying the Reich, but with the Russians. A separate peace was conceivable only with Stalin, who "is in a position to switch his war policy 180 degrees in a single night." Goebbels admired Stalin. Having kept himself well informed on international events as well as on developments in the regions occupied by the Allies, he is particularly struck by the disparity between the commitments undertaken by Stalin at Yalta and what German information (correctly) reports the Soviets are doing in Poland. That "sly, cunning peasant" is the master diplomat of the war, to Goebbels's mind. Greater even than Stalin's diplomatic skill, however, is his political acumen. The purge of the Soviet military hierarchy in the 1930s, referred to here as "army reform," was a brilliant stroke from which Stalin "is now reaping the rewards." The Russian generals and marshals leading their troops into Germany are "extraordinarily energetic men . . . carved from good political timber." Goebbels sees the Nazi failure to destroy the Wehrmacht leadership, perhaps instead of the S.A. in the 1934 "Night of the Long Knives," as an enormous error, which saddled Germany with a decadent, unimaginative, even cowardly military elite. Only General Schörner, "no chairborne or map general," is worthy of praise. Particularly impressive is Schörner's novel method of dealing with "professional stragglers, men who continually manage to absent themselves in critical situations and vanish to the rear

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on some pretext or other." Goebbels notes: "His procedure with such types is fairly brutal; he hangs them on the nearest tree with a placard announcing 'I am a deserter and have declined to defend German women and children.' The deterrent effect on men who might have it in mind to follow them is obviously considerable."

As Trevor-Roper points out, the political tenor of this book is consistent with Goebbels's early identification with the more radical "left-wing" elements in the party. His suggestion that a pattern indicated in these diaries, in which Goebbels on occasion reveals disenchantment with Hitler, only to be disabused of his heretical thoughts after each personal contact with the Führer, parallels one 20 years earlier, when Goebbels allied himself briefly with Gregor Strasser, is also well taken. But it should be noted that some scholars (such as Joseph Nyomarky, author of *Charisma and Factionalism in the Nazi Party*) do not believe that the 1925 alliance with the subsequently murdered Strasser, though based on an ideological dispute with Hitler, was in fact anti-Hitler in its character. Goebbels, the creator of the "Führer-myth," was incapable of sustaining any disagreement with Hitler. Undoubtedly this often compelled him to reassess his radical political instincts—his contention in these pages that the true purpose of the war was to administer a coup de grace to England, not to destroy Bolshevism, runs counter to Hitler's ideological thought. Here is one instance in which Goebbels is confusing a propaganda line, used with Hitler's approval during the last months, with his personal views. Had the diaries been published in the circumstances Goebbels hoped for, this sort of thing would have had to go. But an adjustment of that nature would have been of no consequence to him. Goebbels was the consummate political opportunist; it is safe to say he did not suffer from crises of conscience.

A couple of items demonstrate the skills that facilitated Goebbels's rise to power. He predicts Churchill's postwar electoral defeat; he coins the phrase "iron curtain" to describe Soviet rule in Eastern Europe a year before Churchill's Fulton, Missouri, speech. But on the whole, save for a few isolated paragraphs, these final entries offer students of the period no great insights. The book is rough-draft propaganda by the master of the Big Lie.

Eric Breindel

Eric Breindel is writing a book about the assassinations of Lord Moyne and Count Folke Bernadotte for Random House.

Next Week:

Robert Alter

on

Isaac Bashevis Singer.

Spectral Emanations
New and Selected Poems
by John Hollander

(Atheneum; cloth, $12.50; paper, $7.95)

It is exactly 20 years since the appearance of John Hollander's first book of poems. I read the book then, soon after I first met the poet, and was rather more impressed by the man than by the book. It has taken 20 years for the emotional complexity, spiritual anguish, and intellectual and moral power of the man to become the book. The enormous mastery of verse was there from the start, and is there still, so augmented that only James Merrill in his own generation seems to me Hollander's peer as an *artist*, as a stylist equal to Auden and to Wilbur. But there seemed almost always to be more knowledge and insight within Hollander than the verse could accommodate. That disjunction healed slowly, and still was not mended fully in "Visions from the Ramble," the brilliant, ambitious and very personal long poem that Hollander published in 1965, just past the middle of the journey.

Possibly so subtle and learned a sensibility had to defer poetic maturity, had to undergo a slow, patient development. As a poet, Hollander was not truly Hollander until the volume, *The Night Mirror*, published in 1971, when he was past meridian. His book of selected poems, now published, is strongest in his work of the 1970s, in the sequence or long poem "The Head of the Bed," in the title sequence of "Tales Told of the Fathers," and in "Spectral Emanations," the superb and difficult long poem that should make a new beginning for him.

Hollander began as an Audenesque poet of the 1950s, merging the American Auden back into the Jonsonian line of measured wisdom. But from *The Night Mirror* on, Hollander surprisingly blends Jonson and Shelley in a single body, with Stevens inevitably displacing Auden as central precursor. Quite explicitly, Hollander has developed into an American-Jewish High Romantic, esoteric and elegiac, and daring to write long poems in the Sublime mode. "Reflections on Espionage," too long to be included in this selected volume, allegorized Hollander's ambitions with deceptive playfulness. "The Head of the Bed" concealed something of its complexities and its profound design beneath a graceful mythological pattern, baroque in its interwindings. "Spectral Emanations" brings its difficult vision directly to the reader, demanding extraordinary energy of response, and a genuine labor of reading. With this poem, Hollander adds another to the formidable group of major achievements by poets of his generation. "Spectral Emanations," in scope and splendor, is comparable to Merrill's "The Book of Ephraim," Ashbery's "Fragment," and Ammons's "Hibernaculum" and "Sphere." But it is the most recondite and elaborate of these poems, and indeed is as difficult as the Stevens of "The Auroras of Autumn." It demands rereadings, and greatly rewards them.

At once an American and a Jewish fable, the poem moves out from a suggestion in Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun*, for a seven-branched allegory celebrating the recovery of the golden lamp that Titus robbed from the Second

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under cancer

On the Memorial building's
Terrace the sun has been buzzing
Unbearably, all the while
The white baking happens
To the shadow of the table's
White-painted iron. It darkens,
Meaning that the sun is stronger,
That I am invisibly darkening
Too, the while I whiten.
And only after the stretching
And getting up, still sweating,
My shirt striped like an awning
Drawn on over airlessness;
After the cool shades
(As if of a long arcade
Where footsteps echo gravely)
Have devoured the light;
Only after the cold of
Plunge and shower, the pale
Scent of deodorant stick
Smelling like gin and limes,
And another stripy shirt
Can come, homing in at last,
The buzzing of having been burnt.
Only then, intimations
Of tossing, hot in the dark
Night, where all the long while
Silently, along edges
There is flaking away.

In this short while of light
My shadow darkens without
Lengthening ever, ever.

Copyright © 1978 by John Hollander

Temple in Jerusalem. Hollander restitutes for the lost sacred illumination by seven color-visions, each supported by a prose-poem as commentary. The 40 pages of verse and prose constitute a brief epic marked by bitter wit, by an impressive awareness of the painful burdens of literary representation this late in tradition, and by an authentic and very surprising communal passion, which hesitates upon the verge of allowing itself expression in the accents of the Jewish religion. At least two of the sections, "Yellow" and "Violet," seem to me individually great poems, but it is the total coherence of the entire sequence, its difficult rightness, that is most admirable and that promises to make this work canonical.

As "Spectral Emanations" occupies only a sixth of this generous volume, I will devote the remainder of this review to Hollander's other poems, and will publish a full commentary upon the new long poem elsewhere. Hollander is a restless and very varied poet, and many readers prefer him as a satirist, or as a comic writer, or in poems of ironic self-reflection. This selected volume gives much of its space to those modes, as well as to shaped poems and to philosophical meditations. There are some losses, which I regret, particularly of such visionary lyrics as "The Long and Short of It" and "As the Sparks Fly Upward," for which the reader will have to return to *The Night Mirror*. And though the splendidly outrageous "The Loss of Smyrna" is here, the equally scabrous tribute to Copenhagen from *Town and Country Matters* is sadly missing. I could have spared the witty poem "New York," in the mode of Juvenal and Dr. Johnson, in return for these, or else given up the neo-Marvellian "Upon Apthorp House" for more of Hollander's poignant and unmatched translations of Yiddish poetry. Partly I expose my own neo-Romantic bias, but the greatness of Hollander is in his controlled pathos and his difficult visionary work, and not in his seductions by the social muse.

The poems that I urge upon new readers, besides "Spectral Emanations" and "The Head of the Bed," would include "On the Calendar," "Tales Told of the Fathers," "Mount Blank," "The Night Mirror," "Under Cancer," the versions of the Yiddish poet Halpern, "Ad Musam," and "From the Ramble." But there are many more nearly as good, and my sensibility is narrower than Hollander's. What this volume brings us is another poet as vital and accomplished as Ammons, Merrill, Merwin, Ashbery, James Wright, an immense augmentation to what is clearly a group of major poets in their late forties, or early fifties. I quote, from Hollander's "Yellow," his vision of the Sabbath as an epitome of both the promise and the fulfillment of both his work and that of the other strong American poets of his generation:

To have been kept, to have reached this season,
Is to have eternized, for a moment,
The time when promise and fulfillment feed
Upon each other, when the living gold
Of sunlight struck from the amazing corn
Seems one with its cold unending token,
The warm time when both seem reflections
from
The bright eyes of the Queen of the Peaceful
Day being welcomed with these burnings,
These prophetic seeds of the Ripener,
Brightness rising and getting on with things.

Harold Bloom

Harold Bloom's most recent book is *Wallace Stevens: The Poems of Our Climate* (Cornell Univ. Press).

The Value of the Individual: Self and Circumstance in Autobiography by Karl Joachim Weintraub

(University of Chicago Press; $24)

"Individuum ineffabile est": individual being is inexpressible. So we are told in the dedication of Karl Weintraub's book. Doubtless it is this ineffability of individual existence that accounts for a very solid 400-page book which is one prolonged struggle with the question of individuality and which the author describes, in the first sentence of the introduction, as "an essay, an attempt, a trial," which he may have written "only for himself."

Modest and personal as the result may be, the project Weintraub sets for himself could hardly be more ambitious: nothing less than a history of Western culture from classical antiquity to the early 19th century, traced in evolving conceptions of the individual and changing attitudes toward individuality. Weintraub's is a relatively modest attempt; his major predecessor, Georg Misch (to whom Weintraub, as he freely acknowledges, is considerably indebted), spent a lifetime and nearly *3000* pages tracing the evolution of self-conscious individuality through autobiographical literature. Misch's work was cut off by his death before he succeeded in getting well out of the Middle Ages. (Misch's disciples added another 1000 pages thus bringing his *Geschichte der Autobiographie*

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up to the 19th century.) Ineffability would seem, in the end, to come to much the same thing as endless effability.

But this concern with the individual and the high valuation placed on individuality is, as the thesis of *The Value of the Individual* maintains, a distinctly modern affair (an especially Western one, too, it might be added). As fascination with the individual self, its ineffability and uniqueness, occurred only well on in the history of the West, so also, according to Weintraub's argument, autobiography is a recent phenomenon. Moreover, the self's ineffability and the emergence of autobiography are closely related facts: because the self is indescribable, incommensurable, unique, there is nothing for it but to tell its one-of-a-kind story. Individuality and autobiography simultaneously came into their own around 1800 (just about the time the word "autobiography" came into the English language): before 1800, few or no "true" autobiographies, after 1800 the deluge. And for Weintraub that date is not without another significance, for it was in the first decade of the 19th century that Goethe commenced writing the book Weintraub would doubtless judge to be the greatest of all autobiographies, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*.

It has been observed that an autobiographer, all the while he writes, always knows the end or th utcome of his story—nothing other than his present self. Likewise, Weintraub knows at every point in his history what the end of his story is—or I should say *who* the end of it is, for the inevitable, foreseen conclusion, never lost sight of and putting pressure on the discussion of St. Augustine or Montaigne or Rousseau or any other autobiographer, is Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Everyone else, even those great men and great classics of autobiographical writing I have mentioned, pales into insignificance in the progress toward the autobiographer's apotheosis in Goethe. The autobiographer always says implicitly, "I am that I am, and this is my story." The autobiographer will of course reject all sorts of earlier selves in the march toward his present self, and, as one might expect, much the same thing happens in the treatment here of all the failed individualities and incomplete autobiographers that history required and produced before arriving at the genuine article, the incomparable Goethe. In his discussion of Vico, Weintraub speaks of the tendency in certain observers to "conceive of historical processes as movement toward predetermined destinies, as the gradual realization of final causes, or as the unfolding of the predetermined nature of things" and in a parenthetical throwaway he demonstrates that he might as well be describing his own writing in the history of autobiography as Vico's in the history of ideas: "Thematic history has a similar tendency—as the writer of this essay regretfully acknowledges." Theme implies pattern, pattern implies a beginning (St. Augustine), a middle (Montaigne), and an end (Goethe), and the thematic historian must follow his own vision of "the predetermined nature of things," no matter what the consequences for the beginning, the middle, or the end.

In such a thematic proceeding much will inevitably be sacrificed, and Weintraub is not unaware of the cost. On the contrary, I believe he knows exactly what he is gaining in what he may lose, and he is willing to make sacrifices because he feels— I gather from the chapter on Goethe and from the postscript—that the historical and cultural stakes are so high. This is not a book written by someone who understands his subject, the ideal of individuality, in a detached or amused or ironical way. Indeed it is because he is so entirely committed to the ideal of individuality that in the end Weintraub warns very strongly against excesses, perversions, and misconceptions—for example, the vulgarity of thinking that "doing your own thing" is the same as individuality or that a self worth the name is possible in isolation from history and from its own time. It is only in Goethe that Weintraub finds the claims of the self and its world precisely balanced and this is why he is willing, when necessary, to sacrifice other autobiographers in favor of this fullest, truest, and most worthy exemplar of the individual.

I see the reasons, yet am reluctant to give full assent. Of Goethe, Weintraub writes, "The basic network of meaning was part of the old man's consciousness; as with all autobiographers (and what historian's work is free of it?) this truth was superimposed on the truth of past events." The intense critical interest in autobiography of recent years is to be explained in part by the fact that the critic is a vicarious autobiographer, and surely Weintraub can be seen here to be writing his own vicarious autobiography. But as no two men have the same autobiographies so no two men will impose quite the same truth, and Goethe's autobiography will not answer to everyone's experience and vision as it evidently does to Weintraub's.

I have questioned *The Value of the Individual* because, as a major work of scholarship and an important cultural document in its own right, it demands such questioning. It is the first serious attempt in English to write the philosophical, psychological, cultural history of the West out of autobiographies, and while the book may remain an essay, the boldness and the scope of the undertaking need no emphasis. It is not only for its boldness and scope, however, that Weintraub's book should be praised: there are a hundred felicities of historical understanding and critical insight scattered along the way in the chapters on (to mention those I most enjoyed) Abelard, Cellini, Cardano, Vico and Gibbon, and Rousseau. No one else writing about autobiography and individuality has anything like the historian's

Coming Soon

General Gavin on General MacArthur

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perspective Weintraub commands. This perspective allows him (and with him the reader) to discern a figure in a carpet where before there was only a profusion of bright coloring and a confusion of vague lineation but all sadly lacking a pattern of historical interpretation. With this volume Weintraub has done much, both for the reader of autobiography and for the student of cultural history.

James Olney

James Olney, professor of English at North Carolina Central University, is currently editing a volume of essays on autobiography for Princeton Unversity Press.

The Child in the City by Colin Ward

(Pantheon; $12.95)

The inner city child isn't seen as much as editorialized about. To one set of commentators, he's an incorrigible mugger, graffiti-writer and genetic failure; to another, the innocent victim of a system intent on turning him into cannon fodder. It's encouraging, then, to read this study of the inner city child in England and America; its aim is neither to build up nor tear down, but simply to look at the relationship of the child to the environment with a steady, compassionate eye.

Briefly, Ward's main points are these. In spite of the poverty and overcrowding, the British and American city at the turn of the century was a nurturing place for working-class children. This was due in great part to the fact that poor people "won space" from the city at large and filled it with their own distinctive forms of life—stores, taverns and parks as well as complex (and, for a child) protective webs of family and social relationships.

With the increase of automobile traffic, the exodus of more talented families to the suburbs and the proliferation of large, impersonal housing projects (called "schemes" in England), the child's ability to feel at home in the city decreased. People began to have less personal stake in their environment; neighborhoods started to crumble. Streets that once were playgrounds for kids now became war zones. To alleviate this situation, Ward urges that the disadvantaged child be reintroduced to the city through clubs, jobs, safe transportation, safe streets—and he describes a number of projects around the world which try to do this, ranging from the preservation of a 19th-century canal in Manchester to the child-run Pioneer Railway in Budapest.

Ward's vision of a lively, varied city filled with lively, resourceful kids is one with which few people would quarrel, and yet it does have a slightly anachronistic, early 1960s quality about it. At a time when the cities are bleeding for money and governments are tightening their belts, the possibility of making decaying neighborhoods into cheerful, cohesive communities seems remote.

Also, though he tries to look at all sides of an issue, Ward's attempt to cover so much ground—his subjects range from Piaget's theories to the virtues of the skateboard—makes it impossible for him to say more than a few cursory words on many important subjects. For instance, he never really confronts the problem of the learning difficulties of the working class child. Instead, he falls back on conventional wisdoms: poor children's learning problems most likely stem from self-contempt; busing seems to do more harm than good; perhaps we should put more money in early childhood education. (He doesn't mention the 1972 study by Christopher Jencks which suggests that preschool education doesn't make much difference one way or the other.)

In any case, his arguments seem weak in this instance, and, what's more to the point, unnecessary. For there's an interesting line of thought in his book which might, if followed, have been more illuminating than his citing of old (or current) verities.

He suggests many times that living in a hazardous environment limits a child's adventurousness, and that this fear carries over into other areas of the child's life. Isn't it likely then that for many inner city children learning itself is a fearful business, and that the unknown territory inside the schoolbook or the teacher's head is every bit as treacherous as the dark alley or burnt-out building? In my own experience the kids with the most "outside" interests are always the ones most easily interested in new subjects; their intellectual curiosity is just another aspect of their general daring. The analogy that Ward suggests between the physical and abstract environments is fascinating, but unfortunately he doesn't develop it.

Another issue he does only partial justice to is the question of youthful crime, especially vandalism. No doubt it's true; as he says, that working class children's "picture of the city and their own part in it is conditioned by the esteem in which it is held by their elders," so that if parents treat their neighborhoods badly, children will too. It's also probably true that there's always been some vandalism in cities where people live on top of one another and kids have a chance to drive the enemy-adult crazy. (Ward cites as evidence some amusing 14th-century complaints about ball-playing near Parliament.)

Yet these arguments don't get much beneath the surface of the problem. Clearly, there's something about crime that's both attractive and self-defeating to children, but how do these two go together? Is there a qualitative difference between the act of mugging an old lady and stealing a 10-speed bike? What kinds of inner dramas are being acted out? The problem is a perplexing, even mysterious one, and, though Ward makes some attempts to offer answers, what's really needed is a careful look at the satisfactions children get from crime, what thoughts they have about it, how they feel when they get caught and when they go free.

What is most useful about *The Child in the City* is not the information or the theories; though well-presented, they're somewhat familiar and, in certain cases, merely suggestions for further research. The sensibility behind the book, however, is a sympathetic, balanced one which other writers in the field should take heed of. For bringing a note of calm and rationality to an often emotionally-charged subject, Ward is to be commended.

George Blecher

George Blecher teaches literature and creative writing at Lehman College, City University of New York.

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Brief Reviews

Woman of Letters: A Life of Virginia Woolf by Phyllis Rose

(Oxford; $12.95)

No one seems to be afraid of Virginia Woolf these days. Phyllis Rose has dared to write one more biography, in which she suggests why Woolf frightens so few away: "If Woolf's life and work have relevance to many who are not manic depressives born to culture and terrified of life, it is because she was not as unique as she often thought and sometimes feared she was, because her fears speak to other people's fears, because her sense of life's important points, its delights and crises, correspond with theirs, because she speaks for a class and not for herself alone, and finally because she successfully transformed her life into a life of letters which anyone may read."

As Rose reads that life, Virginia Woolf was not an "isolated and somewhat precious technician," but a resilient feminist writer. But as Rose writes her biography, this new political Woolf does not quite come alive. There's not much to learn about Woolf's life that Quentin Bell hasn't already told in his masterful biography. Rose simply recounts the familiar events of her difficult life—her mother's and sister's deaths, her father's tyrannical presence, her half-brother's traumatizing sexual attentions, her exclusion from Oxbridge and her inclusion in Bloomsbury, her love affair with Vita Sackville-West—and too studiously avoids an emphasis on her bouts of insanity. There is doubtless more to be said about Woolf's fiction, but Rose, in considering the novels as "not meditations on philosophic themes but personal treatments of vital and immediate problems of identity," may not say quite enough.

Woolf's perspective was undeniably feminist, but her consciousness was not primarily political. "What bound people together escaped her," Stephen Spender has observed. "What separated them was an object of wonder, delight and despair." Rose herself tells us, "Iris Origo has described her as an insect beating against a pane of glass to get to a light on the other side. David Cecil thought she was like a beautiful mermaid, who would swim up out of the sea to have a look at the rest of us—remote, but very curious. Alix Strachey said she always looked as though she were surprised to find herself there." She was not Everywoman. Perhaps we should be more afraid of Virginia Woolf; more baffled, curious and surprised than Rose wants us to be.

A.H.

Three By Box by Edgar Box

(Random House; $12.95)

The Case of the Missing Mystery Writer is over. Gore Vidal has emerged from behind the facade of Edgar Box, taking his first bows for three 1950s mystery stories that remain classics of the genre. He left behind some rather tantalizing clues, but no one found them, at least not right away. Undetected, Vidal dropped his sleuth, Peter Cutler Sergeant II, into the lives of ballerinas, congressmen and socialites of all stripes. Who else would limit his detective to investigating the thin upper-crust of eastern society? Look again at his protagonist Peter Sergeant, public relations man and would-be detective, and you'll find Vidal's fingerprints everywhere. Sergeant never fails to win the leading lady. He entraps the guilty party with consummate skill. He flaunts authority, fights off homosexual advances and feigns disinterest in money or fame. And he gets both.

Why the pseudonym? No good writer—even one destined to be a literary giant—need be ashamed of these three stories, each designed to keep the reader tingling with apprehension. Peter Sergeant begins each story as a suspect in the murder case, collecting evidence—for amusement and income—that never fails to pinpoint the real murderer. The first story, *Death in the Fifth Position*, is by far the best—a bizarre and cleverly plotted account of three deaths in a New York ballet company. *Death Before Bedtime* offers a first glimpse of what later became a favorite Vidal subject—Washington politics. And the third, *Death Likes It Hot*, explores fur-collar crime among those he would someday join—the jet set.

Thus Vidal not only offers the solution to the "Edgar Box" mystery but also several clues to his future direction. The mystery form only seems to restrain a writer. As Edgar Box, Gore Vidal held nothing back; he felt free to excite and tantalize with every word and emotion he knew. As with his later novels, essays and plays, the constraints of form liberate his talents.

D.B.

In Search of History: A Personal Adventure by Theodore H. White

(Harper & Row, $12.95)

Theodore H. White's book is a reassessment of the meaning of America as well as of his own experience as a journalist and writer, a storyteller as he calls himself. It is a candid account; the author reflects ruefully on the political naivete that marked the early stages of his journey toward political maturity.

White began as a war correspondent in China—eventually to work for Henry Luce's *Time* magazine.

Thunder Out of China brought him onto the American scene in 1946 at the beginning of the great postwar debate on China policy. White's feeling toward Nationalist China's Chiang Kai-shek had gone from admiration, to pity, to scorn, and his best-seller (written with Annalee Jacoby) helped to form the American mood against intervention on the China mainland. To White's surprise and regret, the book broke his ties with *Time* magazine and Henry Luce, whose appreciation of Chiang was diametrically different. Journalistic plums on other trees were available, but White picked the one that proved to be bitter—*The New Republic* of Henry Wallace's editorial stewardship.

The experience with Wallace was brief, about six months in 1947. He was unimpressed with Wallace's political ability, but gave him high marks for his knowledge of plant genetics, and in retrospect considers him "the most devout seeker for Truth and Peace of God."

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What else did he learn at *TNR*? One, that what he wrote "had to fit that line which supported Henry Wallace's views, just as what he wrote at *Time* magazine had to fit the line of Henry Luce"; and two, "that a magazine committed to, or dominated by a single man, as most sectarian magazines are, is as rigidly restricted in opinion as those magazines which depend on the marketplace and profit."

And so he parted from *TNR* as he had from *Time*, because of a "breach in politics that no amount of good will could bridge." (The wound left by Wallace on *TNR* was deeper and more serious than any trauma suffered by White.) Still, his early anti-Chiang views and his working for Wallace at *TNR* placed White far to the left in American politics, much farther than he wanted to be. But his later political writings and the great success of *The Making of the President, 1960*, which won the Pulitzer prize, have long since rehabilitated White and placed him in an exclusive niche as our foremost political storyteller, with a gift of style second to none. Excerpts from this book have appeared in *Time*, and White reviewed a book for *TNR* this May, thus closing two circles of his career.

One is not likely to be greatly impressed, however, by the accumulation of political wisdom that White has extracted from his experience. His view of America as the land of opportunity with a capital O, his vision of political heroes dominating history, and his commonplace ideas about the role of accident in history are not the grist of complex political and social analysis. Nonetheless, the high adventure that is White's career, vividly written, is well worth reading as a modest—and unintended—celebration of the life and character of its author.

R.J.M.

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Washington Diarist

Pants Up

A federal judge has ordered the Bridgeport, Connecticut, fire department to stop giving job applicants a certain test—supplied by the federal government—because, he concluded, it discriminates against blacks and Hispanics. That is dog bites man. The interesting part is the test itself. Among other exercises, would-be firemen were asked to label the following propositions as true or false:

- "Philosophical questions are a waste of time."
- "I can't see how intellectuals get personal satisfaction from their impractical lives."
- "When I was a child, I showed no interest in books."

The correct answer to all of these—according to the Philadelphia consulting firm that got $100,000 to make up the test—is "true." The fire department argued that the test was valid because it is "job-related." I suppose they're concerned that firemen with a philosophical or literary bent might get too enmeshed in moral discourse or a good book during those long hours in the station between fires, and might be unable to tear themselves away when the alarm sounds. Or perhaps they're thinking of the occasion when Henry James was called out to fight a fire and suffered a mysterious injury on which he subsequently blamed a lifetime of sexual abstinence. Better to keep literary types out of the way, perhaps, although it does seem a crude sort of genetic determinism to extend the ban to philosophers like his brother William, too. Perhaps they simply felt that since some must be rejected, it might as well be those who can take it philosophically.

I wonder how this consulting firm decided that philosophical questions are a waste of time. Of course if you can unload this sort of drivel on the federal government for $100,000 you might well conclude that your time is better spent churning it out than wondering whether the glass is half empty or half full. But the great tragedy of this test is that we as a society should be *encouraging* philosophers to become firemen. How else can we hope to solve the greatest philosophical question of all: Why do firemen wear red suspenders?

The New Jersey Supreme Court has taken up the Myron Farber question, and sprung Farber from jail pending its decision. A lower court judge put him there for refusing to obey a subpoena for his notes relating to the case the court is trying. The judge wants to examine the notes in private to see if any of them might help the defendant, who faces a murder charge. Now that Farber is out of jail, he can join his fellow *New York Times* reporters on strike. Maybe he will spend the time completing the book he's writing about the case, the discovery of which has all his defenders running for cover. "The dollar sign has risen to taint his martyrdom," tsk-tsks Charles B. Seib, who covers the press self-scrutiny beat for *The Washington Post*. The dollar sign! There is every difference in the world, of course, when one is doling out First Amendment rights, between a person who is writing for a newspaper and a person who is writing a book. *The New York Times* is a noble First Amendment endeavor—prints dollar signs in its pages only with great distaste. A book publisher (like, say, Quadrangle Books) is, well . . . commerce. Not our class, dear. It's obvious why the Constitution protects newspapers more than books, and I'll be grateful to anyone who can explain it to me. I do know why the First Amendment junkies of the press insist that there is a difference. Their extravagant claims that the press is exempt from various duties and constraints of citizenship would look especially absurd if the press was defined to include anyone who is writing a book, or a pamphlet, or standing on a street corner with a bullhorn, or trying in myriad other ways to pass on information and opinion. In order to avoid confusion, I think we will have to limit these special privileges to card-carrying members of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

I have in my hand (to adopt the appropriate rhetoric for trampling on constitutional rights) a document filed in the Supreme Court last term by the Reporters Committee, the American Newspaper Publishers Association and other official voices of the established press. It is an *amicus* (friend of the court) brief for the case of *Zurcher v. Stanford Daily*, in which the Court ruled last May that newspapers are not immune from search warrants. In that case the press argued that police searches of newspaper offices, even with a warrant and all the other safeguards available to all citizens, should be unconstitutional because such searches deny the newspaper an opportunity to argue against the taking of any particular item of evidence before the item is taken. And what did the press suggest as a proper alternative to search warrants? "Experience with . . . criminal subpoenas shows conclusively that it is feasible to obtain evidence by means that permit orderly assertion of objections and effective containment of the materials disclosed. Use of such means will not deprive law enforcement officers of any evidence to which they are legally entitled; at most, it will briefly postpone access to that evidence until entitlement can be determined by an impartial judicial officer in light of the facts known to all of the parties." To me this sounds like precisely the procedure the judge in the Jascalevich case is insisting upon, which the press now claims is a gross violation of its First Amendment rights.

An astonishing quotation from the late H. L. Mencken is making the rounds, in which he predicts that some day there will be a president from the deep South remarkably similar to the one we now have. He says, in part, "The President's brother, a prime specimen of Boobus Collumnus Rubericus will . . . gather his loutish companions to swill beer. . . . The President's cousin, La Verne, will travel the Halleluyah circuit as one of Mrs. McPherson's soldiers in Christ, praying for the conversion of some Northern Sodom's most Satanic pornographer as she waves his work—well thumbed—for all the yokels to gasp at." Etc. It landed on my desk a few weeks back, and it struck me as very funny, and also as obviously made up, complete with ellipses. So I was amazed to see it reprinted, as if genuine, on the editorial page of *The Washington Post* one day last week. The *Post* picked it up from *The Detroit News*, which credited an article last April by Calvin Trillin in a publication called *The Nation*. Trillin's article is the first known reference to this quotation. Trillin has been having a fine old time issuing non-denial denials ever since, and I will not be so graceless as to steal his excellent jokes on the subject. What amazes me, though, is the way the quotation has taken on a life of its own. Apparently it has appeared in dozens of publications over the last few months. As one picked it up from another, the quotation quickly became detached from its source, and in most cases was identified only as coming from Mencken. Almost no one, it seems, thought to question its legitimacy, even though to pose the question is to answer it. It's wonderful to discover that eagerness to bash Jimmy Carter has made the nation's media so vulnerable to confidence tricks.

M.E.K.

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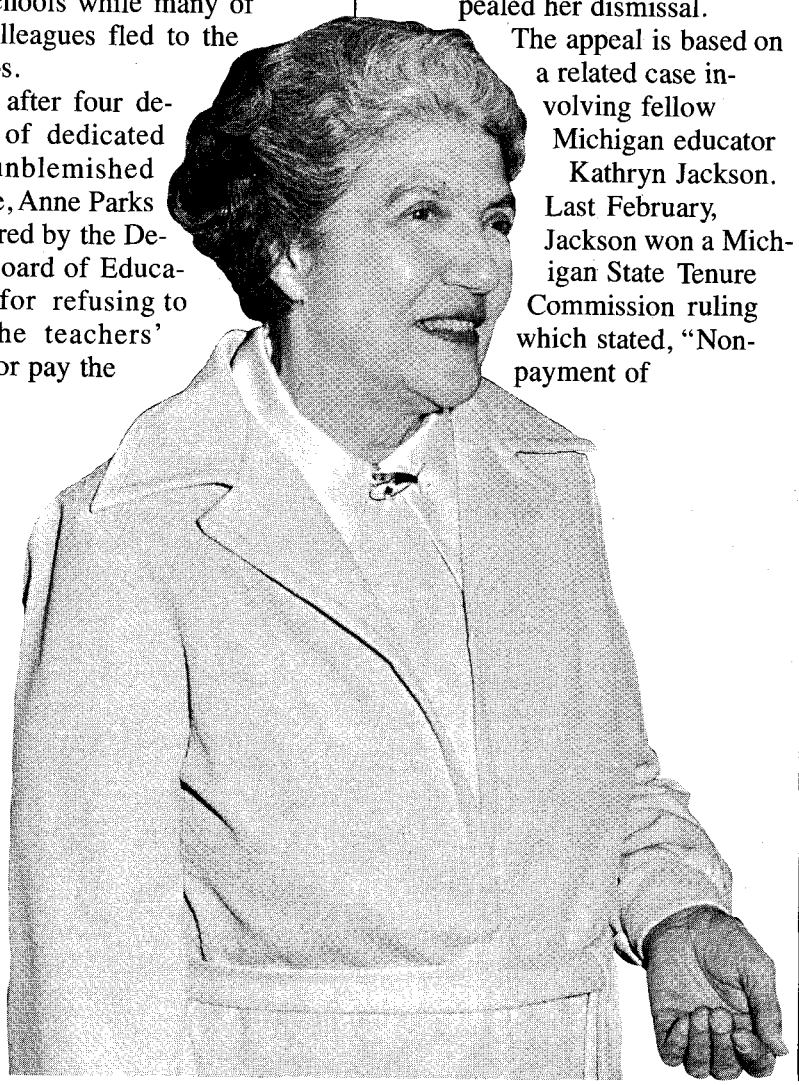
She Failed... To Join The Union.

On March 11, 1978, Anne Parks, a Detroit educator for over 40 years, was fired.

She hadn't neglected her education—she had a master's degree and a Ph.D.

She hadn't neglected her students—she stayed in Detroit city schools while many of her colleagues fled to the suburbs.

But after four decades of dedicated and unblemished service, Anne Parks was fired by the Detroit Board of Education—for refusing to join the teachers' union or pay the equivalent of union dues.



"I'm not against unions or organizations," Dr. Parks says, "but I don't think any person should be forced to join one."

The devoted educator has not given up. With the help of the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, she has appealed her dismissal.

The appeal is based on a related case involving fellow Michigan educator Kathryn Jackson. Last February, Jackson won a Michigan State Tenure Commission ruling which stated, "Non-payment of 'agency shop' fees or dues does not meet the standards of reasonable and just cause for discharge. . . ."

The Jackson precedent could put Anne Parks back in her Cody High School office and among the young students she has served so long and so well.

"How can a teacher teach all facets of an issue," asks Dr. Parks, "when he believes he is beholden to the union for his salary and other benefits? Teachers are responsible to the public, not to union officials."

Anne Parks and Kathryn Jackson are fortunate. They found legal help. But how many others like them haven't?

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is helping everyone it can—currently in more than 80 cases involving academic and political freedom, protection from union violence, and other fundamental rights.

If you'd like to help teachers like Anne Parks fight for real academic freedom, write:

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation
8316 Arlington Boulevard
Suite 600
Fairfax, Virginia 22038

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An important message for anyone concerned about tar.

The following comparisons are based on latest U.S. Government figures for tar and nicotine.

Box or Menthol:

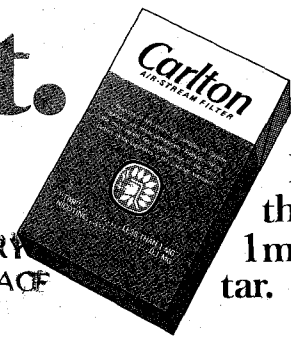
10 Carltons have less tar than 1:

Of all brands, lowest Carlton Box...
less than 0.5 mg. tar, 0.05 mg. nicotine.

	Tar mg./cig.	Nicotine mg./cig.
Camel Filter	19	1.3
Doral	12	0.9
Doral Menthol	12	0.8
Kent	12	0.9
Kent Golden Lights	8	0.7
Kent Golden Lights Menthol	9	0.7
Kool Milds	14	0.9
L&M	17	1.0
L&M Lights	7	0.6
Lark	17	1.1
Marlboro	17	1.0
Marlboro Lights	12	0.8
Marlboro Menthol	14	0.8
Merit	8	0.6
Merit Menthol	8	0.6
Multifilter	13	0.8
Newport	18	1.3
Parliament	9	0.6
Raleigh	16	1.0
Real	9	0.7
Real Menthol	8	0.6
Salem	16	1.1
Salem Lights	10	0.8
Vantage	11	0.8
Vantage Menthol	11	0.8
Viceroy	16	1.1
Viceroy Extra Mild	11	0.8
Winston	20	1.3
Winston Lights	13	0.9

Carlton is lowest.

For results from the latest U.S. Government Report send to
American Tobacco, P.O. Box 4165, Westbury, N.Y. 11592



Less than 1 mg. tar.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

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Box: Less than 0.5 mg. "tar," 0.05 mg. nicotine; Soft Pack and Menthol: 1 mg. "tar," 0.1 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report May '78.

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